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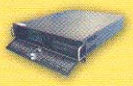

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As the journal of the Alliance for Community Media, COMMUNITY MEDIA REVIEW *shall support the Alliance mission by providing: a comprehensive overview of past, present and future issues critical to the Alliance and its membership; vigorous and thoughtful debate on those issues; and a venue for members and like-minded groups to present issues critical to the Alliance.*

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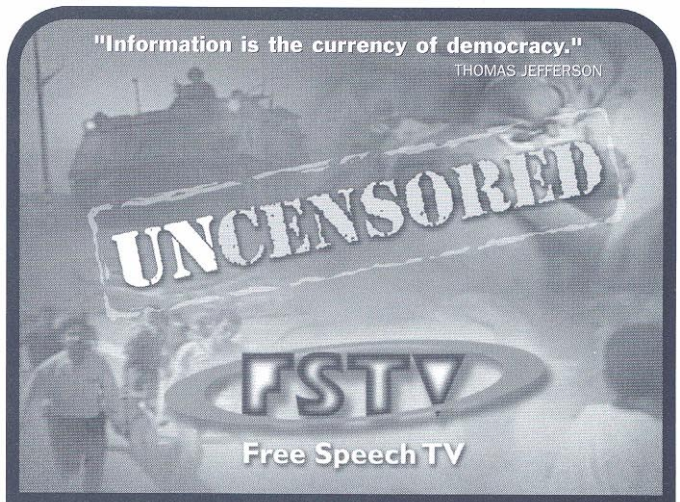

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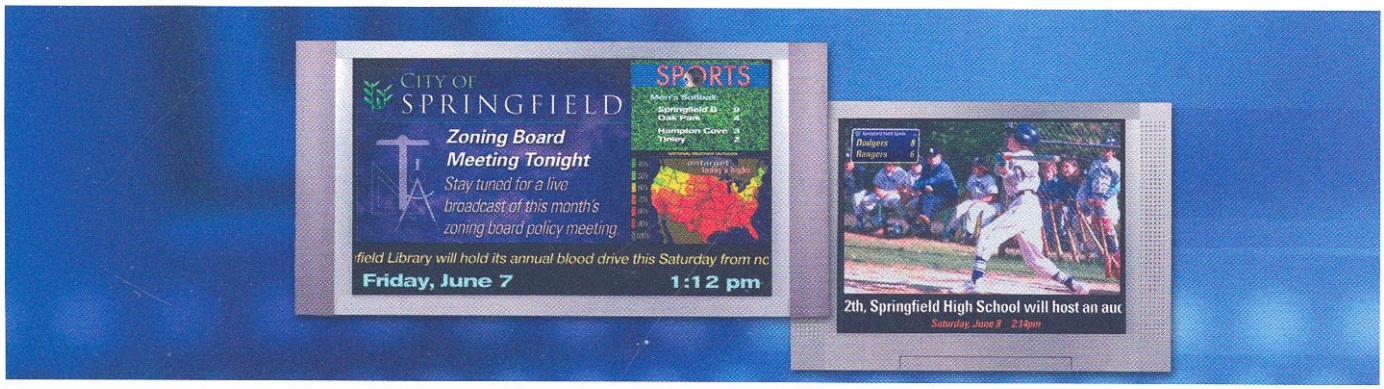

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FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

So Long But Not Goodbye

BY BUNNIE RIEDEL

There's a big part of me that just loves starting something new. It's a combination of curiosity and challenge that sometimes causes me to step off from what I know and head in a new direction. At the July conference in Tampa, Florida, I announced to the board of directors that I would be leaving the Alliance at the end of December, 2004.

I have been executive director of the Alliance since 1998, and now that I am leaving I can't begin to explain where the time has gone, it certainly has flown. So many things have happened that have given me great joy, and I'd like to share some of the highlights with you.

Immediately after being hired as executive director I was asked to attend a Central States regional conference. When I arrived at the airport I was warmly greeted by an entourage of Central States folks and led to a white stretch limousine waiting curbside. We piled into the limo, and the Central States members raised a glass of champagne to welcome me to the Alliance and their region. I remember thinking "Geesh! This is the nicest reception I've ever had by people who have no clue who I am!" It was that reception that forever seared into my mind the need to work hard for the Alliance, I felt obligated to earn the incredible hospitality shown me by the members.

Not coming from a telecommunications background required me to spend many hours learning the issues. For the first six months as executive director I had constant headaches from reading volumes of articles, opinion pieces and booklets. So many people kindly tutored me among them were Alan Bushong, Rob Brading, Nantz Rickard, James Horwood and Andrew Afflerbach. Now it seems I have been working these issues forever and while I certainly refuse to learn how to program my own VCR, I am able to speak with authority about current and emerging technology.

In 1999, I went to South Korea to visit my husband who was stationed at Osan Air Force Base. While there I had the opportunity to do a presentation about access to academics and media practitioners at the Korean Broadcasting Institute. Dirk Koning and other Alliance members had been doing work for years with the South Koreans and the following spring, the South Korea legislature passed "viewer participation programming" on cable, broadcast and satellite. That is not to say there is PEG access in South Korea like the PEG access we have here, but it was a major step in the right direction.

One of the great pleasures of being executive director of the Alliance is the many times I have had the chance to get out to the "field" and meet people who work and volunteer for PEG access. I've toured dozens of access facilities and have found that no two are exactly alike. Access truly does reflect the community in which it resides and that is the beauty of it. Everywhere I have gone I have met wonderful producers doing terrific programming in their communities. These producers are each unique and they give so much of themselves to the field of access.

One of my favorite producers is a fellow by the name of Joe Ed Bunton. Joe Ed produces a political commentary show in Palestine, Texas. At one point in 2001, Joe Ed got himself into a pickle by criticizing the city council. Politicians being what they are, decided to shut down Public access in Palestine in order to get Joe Ed off the air. Joe Ed, being who he is, filed suit against the city in federal court. That might have been okay had Joe Ed not insisted on representing himself, (he didn't care much for lawyers). I spent many hours on the phone trying to convince Joe Ed that he needed to have our legal counsel, Jim Horwood and Peter Hopkins of Spiegel & McDiarmid, represent him because if the case went bad it would not only affect Joe Ed but five states in all. Finally on Thanksgiving, I was able to get his female co-producer and his wife to convince him to let the Alliance handle the case. He relented, telling me how he didn't have the energy to stand up to all these women telling him what to do! Needless to say, we won the case, Public access was restored to Palestine, Texas and Joe Ed got his show back.

There have been a lot of instances of "Joe Eds" through the years and most of the conflicts have been solved by letters and phone calls, but every once in a while, a producer will take on the tedious task of challenging the status quo in court. These are brave men and women who understand and secure the Constitutional guarantee of free speech for all of us.

I have had the pleasure of telling your story hundreds of times to politicians on Capitol Hill, at the statehouse and in the local governments. I love telling the access story to Federal Communications Commissioners because, regardless of their political bent, they really do understand how important access is.

There have been times of great fun at conferences sponsored by the Alliance and by other organizations. And there have been times I have gone home quite discouraged because it never seemed like I could do enough to make sure PEG access is absolutely secure.

I guess if I exercise a final prerogative of being executive director it will be to give you a message of hope. While it is certainly true that during the last couple of years we have seen budget cuts because of municipal economic struggles and we certainly have to deal with more than our fair share of bad-mouthing, PEG access is strong, vibrant and growing! We've had lots of new access centers come "on-line" in the last few years and I've seen an incredible renaissance in various existing centers. Great things are happening for PEG access and I have no doubt that many great things are yet to come!

As I move into a new phase of my life I leave with many great memories and the certain knowledge that I will continue to be part of this wonderful community of people. Thank you for everything!

Bunnie Riedel is executive director of the Alliance for Community Media. Contact her at briedel@alliancecm.org

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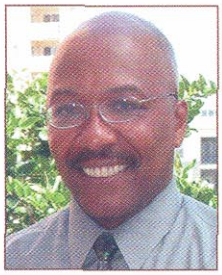

FROM THE ALLIANCE CHAIR

Reflections on the 2004 Conference

BY FRANK CLARK

If you missed this year's Alliance for Community Media International Conference and Trade Show in Tampa, Florida, you missed one of the best conferences to be held in many years. Kudos to the conference planning committee and a special thanks to the local planning committee for a job well done. The Tampa Marriott Waterside Hotel was wonderful, the trade show was huge with enough vendors to satisfy everyone, and the workshops that I attended were very informative.

When it was time to play, Tampa didn't let us down. The Aquarium Party was unique, but my favorite place was Ybor City. For those of you who are not familiar with what I am talking about, Ybor City is a predominately Cuban neighborhood that somehow over the years has evolved into quite an entertainment district. Conference goers were treated to lots of restaurants featuring good Cuban cuisine, enough nightclubs to satisfy just about anyone's taste in music, and lots of opportunities to shop.

At this year's awards luncheon three of our organization's long-standing awards were given to some very deserving individuals. Amy Goodman and Homer Baldwin shared the George Stoney Award for Humanistic Communication. The Buske Leadership Award was bestowed upon Hap Haasch, and the Jewell Ryan-White Award for Cultural Diversity went to Thenmozhi Soundararjan.

On the final day of conference a very special memorial luncheon was held in honor of former chair of the Alliance for Community Media Board of Directors, Brian Anthony Wilson, who died earlier this year. Executive Director Bunnie Riedel offered an open microphone to anyone in the room who wanted to share their feelings, and there was never a lull in the testimonies. This was preceded by an excellent video highlighting Brian, with photos and sound bites from childhood to his service with the Alliance. This luncheon was truly a celebration of Brian's life, and at its conclusion there was not a dry eye in the room.

On behalf of the national board, it is my honor to say thank you Bunnie for a job well done. Good luck to you in the future.

This year's conference also marked a couple of key departures. First, Greg Epler Wood announced that he was stepping down as chair of the Public Policy Workgroup. Greg has done an outstanding job over the past three years in this position. During the membership meeting, Greg spoke of our need for a national needs assessment, which he says he will be working on, and he urged members to volunteer to help with the Public Policy Workgroup.

And finally, Executive Director Bunnie Riedel announced she would not renew her contract in December. Bunnie has served in this position for nearly seven years and has laid claim to being the longest serving ED in this organization's history. She stated that she is not only looking forward to going into business for herself, but now she can be a member of the Alliance. That means that if we are lucky we have not seen the last of Bunnie Riedel.

I thought it would be appropriate at this time to mention just a few of Bunnie's accomplishments while serving as executive director of the Alliance. Bunnie has done an outstanding job of creating a strong public policy presence on Capitol Hill, in district and federal courts, and with the FCC. She has done numerous radio and print interviews with the New York Times, Chicago Tribune, and Los Angeles Times, just to name a few. She has acquired funding and grants from the Department of Education, the Department of Health and Human Services, John T. and Catherine D. MacArthur Foundation and many others. Bunnie has established partnerships with FEMA, U.S. Department of Education, U. S. Department of Health and Human Services, and the League of Women Voters to name a few. On behalf of the national board, it is my honor to say thank you Bunnie for a job well done. Good luck to you in the future.

The Alliance Executive Committee has approved an executive director search process and a search contractor request for proposals (RFP). At the time of this writing, four contractors have responded to that RFP. The executive committee also voted to move the winter board meeting to Washington, DC for the purpose of conducting final interviews. The board's highest priority is to hire an executive director that can continue the excellent advocacy of the Alliance on behalf of you the members and our communities across the nation.

The excitement of this year's conference started long before I arrived in Florida. I decided to ride my motorcycle from my home in Cincinnati to Tampa. I have been riding a bike for many years but this was by far the longest trip I have ever taken alone. As every biker knows, it's not the destination but the trip that matters. Not even those thunder storms that Florida is so famous for could dampen my excitement. Who knows, maybe next year you will see me roll up to the conference in Monterey, California on two wheels.

Frank Clark [frank.clark@cincinnati-oh.gov] is senior administrative specialist with the City of Cincinnati, Ohio.

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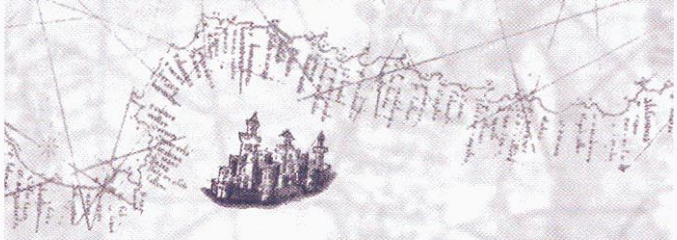

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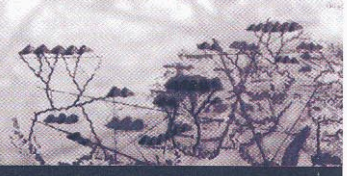

New Media, New Methods

In an attempt to step lightly on the ever increasing treadmill of new technologies and their applications—this issue of *CMR* is dedicated to profiling groups and individuals who are taking brave new steps to apply new media and new methods to build community through media. As we lift one foot and place it in front of the other, we often lose sight of the broader vision of our efforts. We are often busy using our feet to stamp out local 'fires,' while the distant smoke signals meant to guide our way are lost in the haze. Here we have culled some marvelous examples of people compelled to advance our mission in myriad new ways.

Guest editor-in-chief Nettrice R. Gaskins has a pair of submissions discussing effects of digital media convergence and the machines that support us. Long time Alliance member David Keyes unveils a great initiative in Seattle to apply technology as a method for civic participation, and Corinna Moebius details CTCNet's new youth media and civic engagement program, launched collaboratively nationwide. Davis Park gives us a community snapshot of wireless-fidelity (Wi-Fi) applications, while Felicia M. Sullivan melds a historic approach with current technology to create citizen journalists. Kenyatta Cheese has a timely piece on the evolving application of "open source" philosophies to community media, and Jason Daniels explains why a new licensing system called the Creative Commons fits well with our own ideals of community and sharing. Lauren-Glenn Davitian, Martha Wallner and Daniell Krawczyk stress the new survival method of choice: collaboration. Daniell also explains how a new method of digital distribution has revolutionized a similar community and has the potential of impacting our own work. Fred Johnson challenges the movement and our methods in an essay that in and of itself is a new method titled, "Emerging, Converging and Empowering." His article is an extension of multiple conference sessions, a website and blog of the same name. Dirk Koning proposes that community media begin to build and renovate spaces that result in a legacy to mission.

If that isn't enough, we bring you a book review of Howard Rheingold's work titled, *Smart Mobs*, and a new method and product developed at Portland Community Media called, "Adventures in TV Land," written and produced by Veronica Hunter de Bruin of Amsterdam, Netherlands.

We hope these new media applications and methods inspire you to plant your feet more firmly on new ground, to boldly go where you haven't gone before and keep your CTC or CMC or PEG operation on the cutting edge of community building through Media!

— Guest Editors-in-Chief: Nettrice R. Gaskins, Daniell Krawczyk, Dirk Koning

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Nettrice R. Gaskins [nettrice.gaskins@ umb.edu] oversees the administration and development of all aspects of the Commonwealth Broadband Collaborative (CBC). She has over 10 years experience in digital media, education/training, leadership, youth and program development, most recently as the director of the Multimedia Center at Boston Neighborhood Network (BNN). She is also on the national board of CTCNet.

Daniell Krawczyk [daniell@ltc.org] is community programming coordinator at LTC in Lowell, Massachusetts, where he works with nonprofits, youth media, and digital distribution. Previously he worked at the Community Media Center in Grand Rapids, Michigan, where he helped design and launch the MOLLIE project.

Dirk Koning [dirk@grcmc.org] is a long time media activist who has shifted his focus in recent years to assist communities in planning and designing new community centers, libraries, media arts centers, CTCs, ICTs and CMCs. He focuses on the community planning process, information architechture and technical integration.

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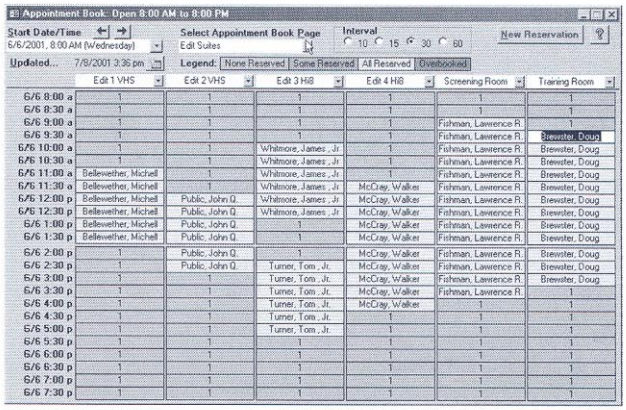

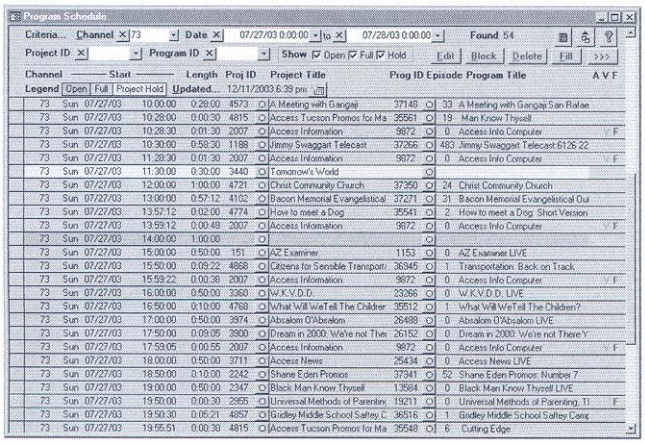

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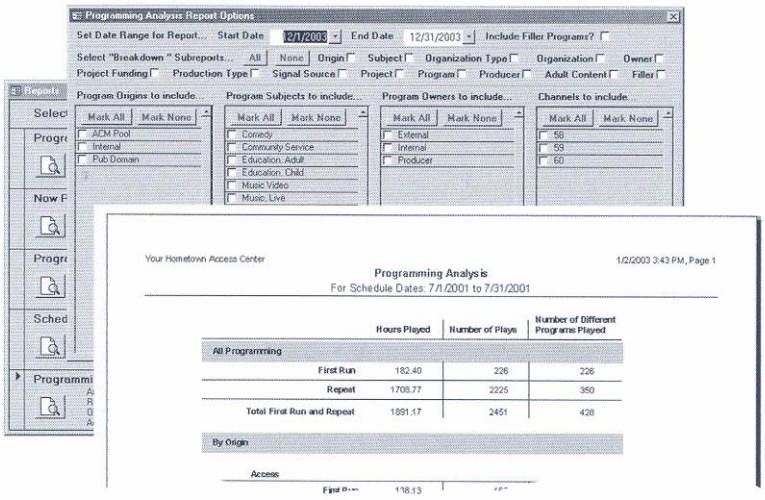

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AccessTucson

Collaborate & Thrive: Models and Resources for Advocacy

BY MARTHA WALLNER, LAUREN-GLENN DAVITIAN, AND DANIELL KRAWCZYK

New Media, New Methods includes a variety of articles that describe emerging communication technologies and how these are being used to promote free speech, civic discourse and community building. The issue features articles on new ways of using technology to create, share, playback, and integrate media at our centers. You'll also find the latest on infrastructures and networks that are being developed and utilized to increase the efficiency and communicative reach of our message and media productions. Best practices abound of from organizations using these emerging tools to do remarkable work.

Why is it necessary for community media/public access TV workers to be actively engaged in the exploration, implementation, and development of new technologies and methodologies? Because we have the expertise to use community-based technology to help solve community problems. People turn to us as trusted advisors and users of new media to help them build communities worth living in. We have 35 years of organization, experience, and resources that we are able to contribute to the effort. And because of our well-resourced position, it is incumbent upon us to use emerging technologies to challenge the threats that undermine the principles and gains of alternative and independent media across the globe.

We will make progress if we work together. The good news is that the community is fundamentally collaborative. Staff and volunteers typically work locally to build community coalitions. Organizations like the Alliance help to harness all of us into a national movement able to influence national policy and new models for community and independent media. But there is plenty of opportunity for us to reach out across media centers (like the Grass Roots Cable Campaign, described here) and across community media sectors, and the various communities we serve and want to serve, to collaborate on advocacy, like folks are doing in the Southern Media Justice Coalition, described below.

The value of emerging technologies lies in the goals they serve. Our goal is to advance the principles and tools of democratic media in order to build a just and livable society. To this end, we offer some of the best practices and lessons we learned in the Media Democracy track at the Alliance for Community Media's 2004 national convention in Tampa.

Campaign to expand licensing for Low Power FM Radio: The case described by Hannah Sassaman of Prometheus Radio (*www.prometheusradio.org*), illustrates how national organizing can spring from a local "point of need." In this case, folks at Philadelphia-based pirate Radio Mutiny, realized their ability to broadcast depended on the success of a larger strategy to legalize micro-radio stations. They identified common cause with fellow broadcasters from immigrant and minority communities, who were wary of continuing their low power broadcasting when the FCC began cracking down on unlicensed stations.

Prometheus has grown the movement by working with local organizers in various locations in the U.S. on radio "barn-raisings," events that include hands-on workshops and the technical set-up of local LPFM stations in communities that will dramatically benefit from low-power radio. The events culminate in a celebration when the switch is flipped and the station goes live! Hannah described one of these barn-raisings done in conjunction with migrant farm workers in Florida. Their station, Radio Conciencia, has multi-lingual programming and their broadcasts have multiplied participation in local organizing efforts to improve the working conditions for migrant farm workers. See www.prometheusradio.org/janna_article.shtml

Prometheus builds on the broad base of interest in LPFM, from religious broadcasters to social justice activists, and have learned to work with organizers from different backgrounds and perspectives. Their work underscores an important value of collaborating across sectors: solidarity with groups on their unique issues can lead to their later support on for media projects and reform.

The Southern Media Justice Coalition (Atlanta, Georgia): The SMJC came together to follow-up on a successful coalition effort by media organizations (radio WRFG, People TV, Indymedia), social justice organizations, the Mayor's Office on Technology, and local university schools of communication to organize a public hearing on FCC ownership rules in the spring of 2003. The coalition now includes many more organizations, including the National Center for Human Rights Education.

The coalition has a number of goals and activities but their core organizing builds on monthly town-hall meetings that focus on a critical social issue, including a critique of how mainstream media covers it. Each town-hall meeting is organized by the organizations doing work on the theme of the month and the media members of the coalition carry out media coverage of the forum, including live radio coverage on radio WRFG, web streaming and later broadcast on People TV (Atlanta's PEG access organization). SMJC used the monthly meetings to also update the public on current media reform initiatives—including efforts to influence FCC policy.

For more info: WRFG 89.3 fm, 404.523.3471; SMCJ Board chair Heather Gray, email: hgray20200@aol.com; and People TV 404.873.6712, alisonfussell@peopletv.org

Youth Media Council: Another pearl of a model of cross-sector organizing, the Oakland, California-based Youth Media Council, has animated 15 representatives of youth organizations active on various issues, including juvenile justice and education equity, into a council, and provides them with training on strategic communications on their issues. Coalition training includes how to frame messages and utilize mainstream and alternative media tools for outreach. YMC

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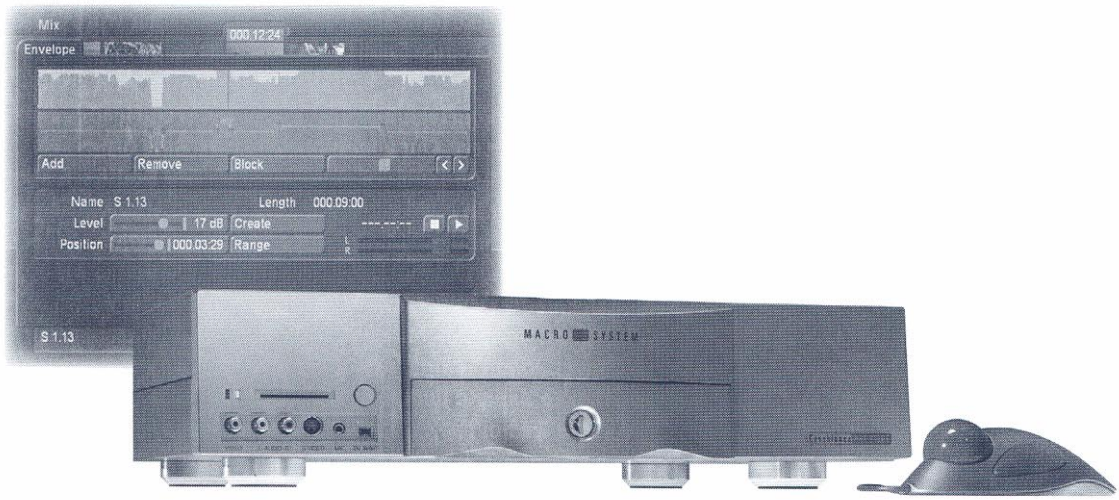

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used these techniques to campaign for media accountability and to monitor local radio and television broadcasters. They have issued a report on these outlet's poor coverage of youth issues in the Bay area. [*www.youthmediacouncil.org/*]

Grassroots Cable Campaign: The Grassroots Cable Campaign is an emerging collaboration between local public access cable/broadband activist groups in several U.S. cities interested in sharing resources and strategies nationally. The four groups developing this project are Media Alliance (San Francisco), Media Tank (Philadelphia), Reclaim the Media (Seattle) and Active Voice (Chicago). The four currently hold regular conference calls to update each other on their local activities, share tactics and resources and plan for more concerted action including the development of a web action center that is planned to include templates for organizing tools, flyers, a journalist primer on cable policy, and links to many other resources. While all of these groups coordinate their local activities with local cable organizations, they all endeavor to build a national base of support for just media policy in collaboration with social justice organizations and public interest organizations.

For more info: Media Tank (Philly) inja@mediatank.org, Inja Coates; Media Alliance (SF) jeff@media-alliance.org, Jeff Perlstein; Reclaim the Media (Seattle) jonathan@indymedia.org; Active Voice (Chicago) karen.young@rcn.com

Philadelphia Community Access Coalition (PCAC): PCAC is a coalition of over 80 organizations in the Philadelphia area including media activists, arts organizations, consumer advocates, labor organizations and welfare rights groups. By "recutting" the issues connected to the cable franchise, they have created a broad base of support to pressure city government and Comcast Cable to improve their practices and policies in a number of areas, including, but not limited to, the franchise issue. Recognizing that Comcast is headquartered in Philadelphia, PCAC realizes that their local campaigning can have national impact. They have used a number of imaginative tools and techniques in their work (see tools/techniques sidebar).

For more info: *www.phillyaccess.org/index.html*

San Francisco Media Advocates: Access SF described the organization and strategies of this coalition, which is currently engaged with Comcast Cable in the city's first cable renewal in 40 years! The coalition has 10 core membership organizations, including Beacon Centers (local community technology centers) Media Alliance, and Latino Issues Forum.

Access SF is developing a website for updates and alerts and has held trainings to teach spokespeople, who can then go out to give presentations to community organizations to explain what's at stake in the franchising process. The coalition works to place the franchise in a larger context by engaging stakeholders in the question: What is the digital future for San Francisco? What would good broadband services look like? How might they serve nonprofits? arts organizations?

To advance this discussion, the coalition and the DC-based Center for Digital Democracy hosted a forum on the Future of Media at the San Francisco Foundation, attended by representatives of 60 organizations. The Forum presentations were wide-ranging, investigating the potential of cable, wi-fi, broadband, public television, radio, internet and community media projects. The event was capped off with an invitation to join with the SF Media Advocates in the current campaign for a franchise agreement that includes strong public interest provisions in cable/broadband services. Organizers reiterate the lesson that engaging people in a cable franchise campaign can be a pathway to engagement in advocacy for other media and telecommunications policies.

For more info: AccessSF, *www.sfctc.org*; SF Media Advocates, *www.mediasf.org/*

Martha Wallner (marthaw@lmi.net) is an active member of Media Alliance (San Francisco, California) and a long time community media activist and practitioner.

Lauren-Glenn Davitian (davitian@cctv.org) is executive director of CCTV's Center for Media and Democracy based in Burlington, Vermont.

Daniell Krawczyk (daniell@ltc.org) is community programming coordinator at LTC in Lowell, Massachusetts.

Lessons Learned

What follows is a compilation of the lessons learned in their organizing work by the various presenters at the Media Democracy Track at the 2004 Alliance conference in Tampa:

▲ We need to make more democratic and participatory decision-making processes one of our organizing and policy goals; the FCC and other government bodies, for example, make a lot of decisions and their processes are often not transparent and allow very little public participation.

▲ We have to make visible the connection between the outcry against against consolidation and support for for public, alternative, non-commercial media.

▲ We need to show social justice/public interest advocates, who are not directly involved in media activism, how they are losing in mainstream media and quantify for them how public interest media can/does provide coverage that helps them.

▲ The best argument for community media is community media itself; the strongest advocates can be the media makers and the audiences themselves – they are "the great untapped resource" for advocacy.

▲ It is important to build a force for sustained advocacy that extends beyond the staff, board and immediate membership of the actual media organizations being threatened and can last beyond specific crises. Only broader-based coalitions can hold elected officials and corporations accountable.

▲ We need a vision for public access to media that covers the new technologies., and we need to translate policy issues so that lay people can understand them.

▲ Virtual (internet–email) organizing is not enough; it must be complemented by face-to-face meeting to be effective.

▲ If you work to support other groups, there is a good chance that later they will return the solidarity and support your work.

See page 15 for techniques, examples, tools and resources.

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General Techniques and Examples:

✔ Look around to see what groups and organizations are already in motion and hook up with them.

✔ Get to know the character of your city/region—find out how it is already organized. By districts? By associations of nonprofits? Work those connections and networks.

✔ Recut issues so that they resonate with larger publics and new allies (e.g. cable policy/franchise as an issue relevant to labor, community organizations, education, arts and consumer groups).

✔ In formulating your strategy, ask who the decision-makers are? Who makes the policies that we are concerned about?

✔ Find ways to let people know that their contribution to the organizing work is valued, however great or small.

✔ Develop a website where people can go to access information, download flyers, file comments with the FCC, write letters to officials, or link to a site where they can do this.

✔ Have a media strategy, prepare information for journalists (models: journalist's primer on media consolidation *www.reclaimthemedia.org/toolkit/fcc-guide_online.pdf*)

✔ Learn how and teach others to monitor media outlets and teach others! Gather clear evidence of your local outlet's failure to adequately cover important issues (or particular issues), their bias and examples of good reporting. Monitoring helps teach media literacy. Report on results to press, elected officials and media outlets. (for current example in use with FCC hearings see: *www.media-alliance.org/article.php?story=2004070619505036)*

✔ Have speaker's bureau trainings to prepare people to visit groups, classes, and organizations; make presentations; make comments to the press and/or at public meetings.

✔ Develop a resolution to present to your elected officials (city, county, state, or federal); before pitching it to officials, solicit endorsements from potential ally organizations. A model resolution against media consolidation: *www.reclaimthemedia.org/stories.php?story=03/03/06/6588694*

✔ Draft a code of conduct and lobby for the cable company (or relevant media outlet or government agency) to adopt it. For example, see: *www.mediatank.org*

✔ Take creative, visual, symbolic direct actions—eg, when activists dressed like the "angels of the public interest" visited FCC chair Michael Powell or when folks in Philly launched their Grassroots Cable Campaign near the large Claes Oldenburg clothespin statue—"Don't hang us out to dry" said a banner and other campaign messages hung from a clothesline.

✔ Use the very media you are trying to defend as tools! PSAs (make some!) Videos, DVDs, radio spots, etc, public affairs programs.

✔ Write hymns/songs to sing in gatherings and direct actions—change the lyrics of well-known tunes.

✔ Creative flyers and hand-outs like the MONOPOLY money made by activists in Philadelphia, showing information on Comcast and cable monopoly, including CEO salary and company profits.

More Resources:

Media Tank hosts a listserv where activists working in different areas of media advocacy, including PEG access, LPFM, wi-fi, spectrum issues, FCC ownership rules etc. share information. It is on this list that some of the first ad-hoc organizing around the public hearings on the FCC ownership rules took off. To subscribe go to *www.mediatank.org*

Free Press has a terrific website with information on activities in media reform all over the country. They also have a place on their site where you can sign a petition calling on the FCC to hold public hearings in every state of the union where people can register their complaints and put forth their visions for changes in media policy. *www.freepress.net/rules/*

Media Justice Immediate Response Fund makes grants in response to quickly developing political situations in the media advocacy field. Grants may be used to support travel, rallies, mailings, printing, materials and other costs associated with educating and mobilizing communities on media issues. *www.fex.org/mjf.shtml*

Reclaim the Media has an excellent website, full of resources including the Media Reform Activist Toolkit at: *www.reclaimthemedia.org/pages.php?node=04/03/07/5756973#community*

The Children's Partnership has two useful guides for community technology centers interested in winning resources through cable franchising at *http://techpolicybank.org/cable.html* and *http://techpolicybank.org/suggestedsteps.html*

Tools of the Trade

Media Empowerment: A Guide to Understanding Media Power and Organizing for Media Justice in Your Community—Organizing Manual—touches on media monitoring, public access cable, LPFM licensing and many other issues related to winning better media for your community. Available at: *www.mediaempowerment.org* (soon in Spanish).

Samples of Media Policy Action Tools for anti-consolidation campaign, media literacy and for community media: *www.reclaimthemedia.org/stories.php?story=03/03/06/6588694*

Beginner's Guide to the Media, links to organizations around the U.S., updates on issues and more: *www.freepress.net/guide/*

Center For Digital Democracy—information on media policy in the public interest, including cable policy and the future of broadband. *www.democraticmedia.org*

Who will control the information highway? A Reporters' Guide to Cable TV and Broadband Internet *www.reclaimtheme dia.org/comcast/CablePrimer.pdf*

Prometheus Radio: How to apply for a Low Power FM Radio License, station models to crib from and how to grassroots fundraise for your new station and much much more: *www.prometheusra dio.org/index.shtml*

New America Foundation's Citizen's Guide to the Airwaves—an attempt to educate opinion leaders and public about the vast value and high-stakes battle for access and ownership of the nation's airwaves with a poster/map of the airwaves and a 50-page Explanation Report. *www.spectrumpolicy.org*

Grassroots Fundraising Journal's website is full of great information on raising money, particularly for community projects: *www.grassrootsfundraising.org/*

The **Association for Progressive Communications**: Internet and ICT's for Social Justice and Development—Active in Africa, Latin America and Europe, they have an excellent website with tools that are extremely useful for U.S. community media advocates, including ICT A Beginner's Handbook (also in Spanish) *www.apc.org/english/index.shtml*

Community Technology Centers Network—hosts a site which includes a policy area: CTC Net-From Policy to Practice. See this section for an advocacy toolkit and links to other media policy sites that can be useful to community media practitioners working in various media. *www.ctcnet.org/policy/index.htm*

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Tooling for Civic Participation

by David Keyes

When she was 85, Cornelia Crittendon told me that "If you don't have an opinion you're nothing...and everyone has an opinion." The challenge for community enablers and policymakers is to ensure that those opinions 1) get expressed at the right time, 2) get heard by the right people, 3) are brought into real dialogue that multiplies understanding and wisdom, 4) are affirmed and acknowledged to have contributed to creating change, and 5) are asked again.

Steven Clift, Chair of Minnesota E-Democracy captured the reality well when he said "The world is run by those who show up..." The challenge facing us as a civic society and in development of electronic media and information tools is how to help people show up. Encouraging more people to show up shouldn't mean more meetings.

Technology can help, alongside better approaches to engagement. Seattle city government and community organizations have been doing some thinking and acting to increase participation and the use of our media and information technology toolbox to do it. Oh yes, we have a long way to go. We're learning from other electronic democracy projects as well. [See links at bottom of this article]. Some of our observations and programs may be of use to others. Feed the common knowledge trough so it can feed us.

Increasing participation require analysis of the civic process and then architecting meaningful participation at meaningful times. We must be clearer about what the decision process is and where the real opportunities are. Is this issue a five year or five week process? Am I involved in finding solutions or are you just informing me, brainstorming, asking for buy-off, or providing multiple choice? We must find tools and approaches that involve more diverse people, more than the same old rabble rousers who have time or money to speak out. Busy elected officials and policymakers also want better input from more diverse constituents. Messages that come at decision points are better than notes that get filed for later.

Selecting the right electronic tools and getting them used also requires media makers to analyze the civic process. Meaningful civic engagement and civic media is not a single event, show or poll, but a change process of organizing involvement and information flow. Our goal is for those developing the input process to automatically consider a series of call-in shows or street corner polling with pda's or remote electronic meetings. The second, more important and perhaps more challenging part of the process is enabling residents to feel comfortable and excited about speaking with these tools. We got over using the telephone and voice mail, so there is precedence for success.

We must strive to build trust and use of our channels, listservs, web, etc. so that when an issue comes up people will use that channel. It requires helping to develop community based media that lies in hands of diverse communities who can help gather input and facilitate dialogue. Along with grocery stores and commercial media, the senior, youth, ethnic, faith and immigrant associations are the front line in tech literacy and building trust in use of a technology for participation. A simple thing like including email to the Mayor or Council in the Internet curriculum starts to build that connection for new residents. We're distributing posters of useful city web resources to promote awareness of e-government. We've seen a great increase in the use of listservs. These include city council members, area transportation alerts and neighborhood associations. These slowly build up connected constituents, ready to comment when the questions are asked or the issues arise.

Quality electronic civic engagement should provide tools throughout the civic process. The attached diagram provides an outline of the civic process which includes issue awareness, identification and development of solutions, decision making, implementation and feedback on implementation. It associates some tools that can be used to foster participation. The diagram is a tool for media centers and information technology departments to sit down with community development leaders and local policymakers to outline where those tools can be applied. The diagram is a work in process; feel free to improve it. As you use it, bear in mind that the tools add to, but are not necessarily a replacement for traditional medium like flyers and phone calls and yes, meetings. Recognize if and when an electronic forum leaves people out—be it web or cable.

Increasingly our city council members have their own email lists and use these for opinion gathering. We have taken email comments during budget hearings. Our SeattleChannel is including polling on its web site and providing background links to materials in its shows. This year, our Community Technology Program, working with the Seattle's Citizens Telecommunications and Technology Advisory Board (CTTAB), provided Technology matching Fund grants to three community-based electronic civic engagement projects that are applying technology tools to 1) increase awareness of community issues, 2) increase community participation in problem solving, and 3) increase interaction with government to resolve those problems.

Two of the community projects involve GIS mapping as a tool to document conditions, discuss desired improvements and talk solutions with city officials. The International District Housing Alliance WILD project paired youth with elders to walk the streets of the International District, document conditions and develop recommended solutions. They partnered with Sustainable Seattle to use the ComNet *(www.fcny.org/cmgp/comnet.htm)* mapping system to track observable data and Photovoice as an approach to digital journalism. The City is helping set up meetings with appropriate staff to discuss solutions. The SeattleChannel will share their process and community meeting on cable and Internet.

We're now looking at additional issues or bodies (e.g. police department or youth council) to bring our tools to the civic process. We're also working toward linking our e-civic engagement work with our race and social justice work.

Electronic civic engagement, distinct

Continued on page 19

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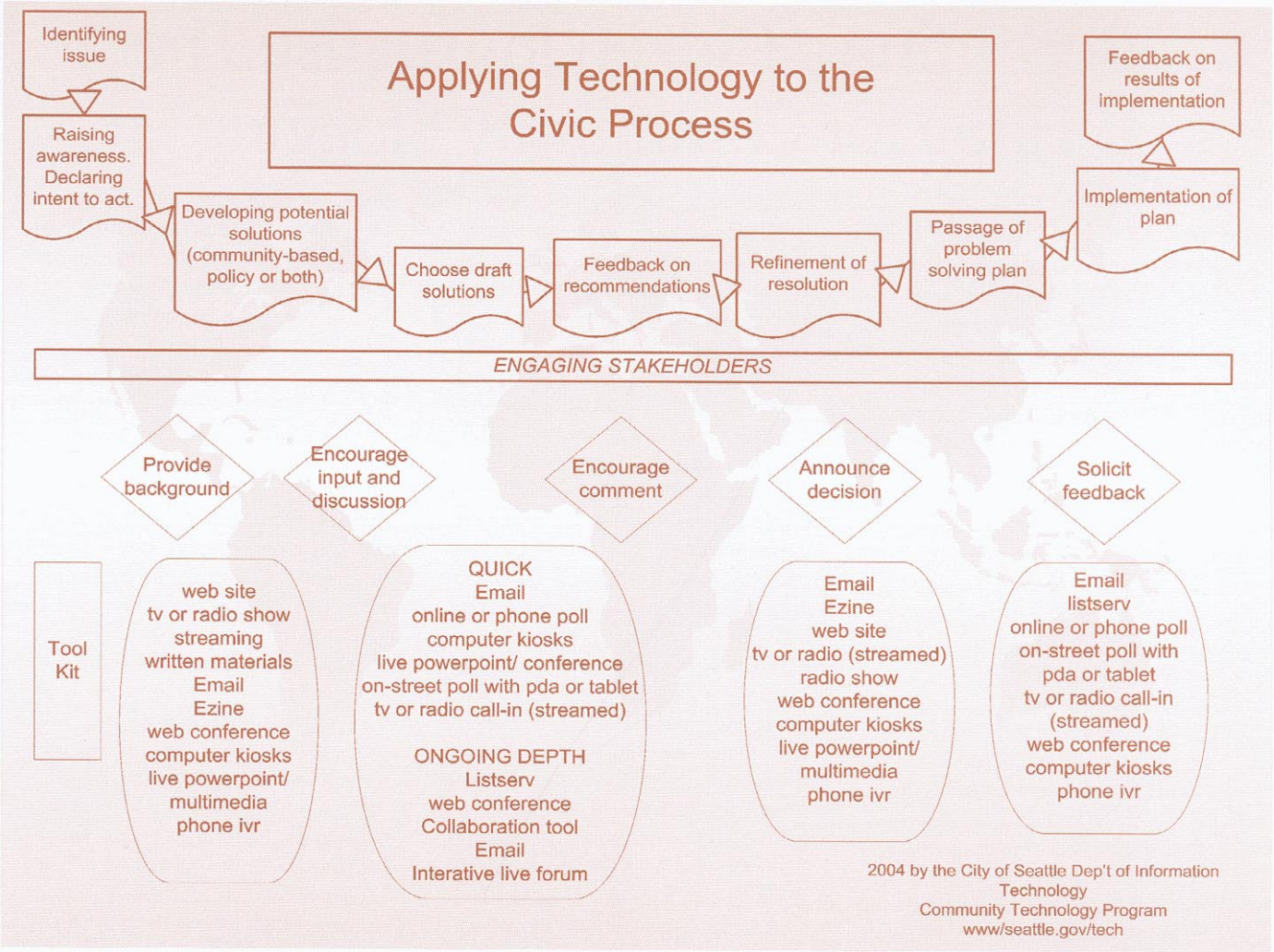

but related to e-advocacy, is still early in its development. In our area, we've drawn some useful conclusions about approach and practice: 1) No one will be interested in every issue. Forge conduits of contact so that people will know when an issue comes up and can be encouraged to participate. 2) Give people the respect to ask what they care about, rather than just asking them to react. 3) Not everyone is interested in endless, in-depth discussion, but may still have an opinion to be registered. Design opportunities for input on the go (e.g polling or short statements) as well as a chance for those who are interested in going more in depth. 4) People need simple background information about how decisions affect them and the factors affecting decisionmaking. 3) We're busy and have messages competing for our attention all the time. Input forums needs to be attractive, concise and clear.

Here are a few more tips:

Every civic engagement campaign and media materials should have or provide links to background, timeline, who's responsible, what input is desired, how to stay in contact.

▲ Electronic engagement is a tool, but not a replacement for face to face forums. Use face-to-face forums to introduce electronic avenues. Try e-discussions as part of a meeting. Show people how to use it. Promote the follow-up call-in.

▲ Consider packaging a series of short bites on a topic rather than long wonky pieces.

▲ Engage diverse moderators from diverse communities to foster diverse input.

▲ Use multiple media in concert. An email can point to a website.

▲ Expand opportunity by using a variety of forums. Add messages in different forums (tag to programs, on newsletters, when teaching a class or paying a bill.

▲ Think creatively about where people congregate and what they're likely to respond to. Think voice mail, cell phones, kiosks, wireless flash screens, video booths, gaming…these are all fair game.

▲ Online electronic democracy resource links can be found at *www.publicus.net* and *www.e-democracy.org*. The National Civic League also has useful tools at *www.ncl.org/about/usefultools.html* and a report specifically on BRIDGING THE GAP BETWEEN CITIZENS AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT WITH INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY at *www.ncl.org/npp/technology/index.html*.

▲ OneNorthwest provides technology assistance and e-advocacy tips at *www.onenw.org*.

▲ America Speaks has used instant polling and authoring tools in community forums to define youth agendas in Washington D.C. and seek solutions to Social Security problems. See *www.americaspeaks.org*.

▲ The Seattle Channel is at *www.seattlechannel.org* and the City of Seattle Community Technology Program is at *www.seattle.gov/tech/*

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Becoming a Citizen Journalist: The Hope for Community Blogging

BY FELICIA M. SULLIVAN

Introduction: Power to the People

In 1776, Thomas Paine distributed his famous pamphlet, *Common Sense,* made possible through the current technology of the day—the printing press. Written in accessible prose, Paine's ideas garnered broad support for an American republic in opposition to a British monarchy. Times have changed. Media conglomeration is threatening diversity of opinion, including news of highly local interest. Political debate in the mainstream media is neither vibrant nor authentic. The average citizen is disengaged from public discourse. Civic participation is waning. Enter the blog and a hope for a revitalized town square.

Think of a blog (short for weblog) as an online series of writings (or posts) submitted under a particular theme or topic. In most instances, these posts are open for reader comment and feedback. Presented as ordinary webpages, a blog is often publicly viewable and can easily take advantage of links. In its most mundane form, a blog is a sort of online diary or journal. Idealized, the blog is the 21st century's equivalent of the Thomas Paine's printed pamphlet. Coupled with a news aggregator—such as an RSS feed which can bring countless blogs to one centralized desktop—and you have the potential for a new way of understanding and knowing about the world around you.

Like any technology, blogs are not a magic tonic that will rid us of corruption, make all of us stand in a giant circle and sing camp songs, or create a truly democratic and engaged citizenry. Blogs present an opportunity. It is now possible for the average citizen to express themselves to many in written (and increasingly visual and oral) form. It is possible for every person to have their own journal of opinion in which to freely express themselves. For those with basic computer skills, the ability to harness this new technology is relatively easy and the costs extremely low compared to printing, publishing and distributing a newspaper.

Blogs and Community Media. Why? So why should community media centers become engaged in blogs? How can they not? The essential mission to bring freedom of expression to the average person is clearly at the heart of both community media and blogging. Harnessing telecommunication systems and tools to be controlled by many rather than a few is the foundation of both. Engaging makers in a public sphere of dialogue are embraced by each of these forms. Both can be leveraged for community communications. These are these are the obvious answers.

The not so obvious answers can be found discussed elsewhere in this issue. Clearly computer-based systems are making their way into community media centers. Yet in many instances these systems are replacing analogue equivalents. New methods and processes are required by these systems, yet new forms of communication are not. As content becomes increasingly bound to information networks—what Jeff Chester, director of Center for Digital Democracy, calls IP-enabled—the need to understand decentralized distribution systems (many-to-many) is vital. These new systems will challenge the way in which media content is delivered. One need only to think of the RIAA's battle with peer-to-peer file sharing systems, like Napster, to see the future concerns for video distribution systems, namely broadcast and cable television.

What blogs bring to the table is a relatively easy to learn, low cost entry into decentralized communication. Once the mechanisms for supporting, creating, and promoting content in such an environment are understood, the ability to ramp-

CITYVOICES: 10 STEPS TO GETTING STARTED

Lowell Telecommunications Corporation is a nonprofit community media and technology center serving the residents of Lowell, Massachusetts. Since its inception the organization has combined a traditional PEG access center with a community technology center in the spirit of building community through technology. With a clear understanding of technology and a commitment to free speech and public communication, LTC launched a community blog, **Cityvoices**, (*http://cityvoices.ltc.org*), with the hope of providing another platform for expression while testing out the relevance of blogging to a community media and technology center.

The steps to creating this blog were relatively easy.

- ▲ Sign up for a Blogger Account—*http://www.blogger.com.*
- ▲ Choose a nice design template for the blog (in this case several options were provided for free).
- ▲ Determine editorial policies which would be consistent with open/public access.
- ▲ Add some relevant links, a Creative Commons license (*www.creativecom mons.com*), and RSS Feed (in this case a free service from Feedburner—(*www.feedburner.com*) which would allow other folks to syndicate the publication and remain up-to-date with all posts.
- ▲ Write and post the first blog entry asking folks to become a citizen journalist
- ▲ Write and distribute widely a press release announcing the blog.
- ▲ Send an invite for each person who is interested in becoming a citizen journalist and create some classes to train others how to participate.
- ▲ Monitor the site as posts come in to assure that they meet the minimal editorial policies—this is sort of like being the playback coordinator for PEG channel
- ▲ Promote the site some more.
- ▲ Wait to see what happens.

up the content delivered (i.e. video) becomes easier. Engagement in blogging also links community media to related peer networks such as community technology, community networking, and community-based news reporting. It strengthens the shared interests between these groups by creating a stronger base of support for all sorts of community communication.

Considerations for the Future

As community media centers enter the world of distributed communication there are a few key concepts to keep in mind. The concept of audience is a very different animal in the blog world. Interactive communications invite conversation and dialogue. The community television program is of the one to many concept of communication; blogs can be many to many. The benefits of such systems is that they provide much clearer feedback on who is interacting with content. But fostering community and developing audience are even more crucial in the world of community blogs.

With a decentralized system, control by a central entity (which community media centers can be) lessens. The infrastructure is built and made available, but the last vestige of a gatekeeper slips away. For many traditional PEG access centers this shift in control can be every bit as daunting as it is to the RIAA. Yet viewed as an opportunity, the ability to lessen staffing pressures, foster interactivity and push these technologies forward for community uses can be well worth the loss of some control. Fusing the two can be even more powerful with a blog partnered with a PEG program.

Finally, the tools are becoming ever easier to access and manipulate. Yet if local control is the ultimate goal, building advanced technology skill sets within the community are important. Familiarity with open source software, basic computer programming, and TCP/IP will be the markers of a community that is equipped to confront this new age of content production and distribution.

Even if you don't end up harnessing blogs for community use, consider checking the technology out. Learn what the form offers. Confront the resistant leaner in you. You may end up deciding this is not a tool you or your community can use. At least this decision will come from an informed opinion and choice.

Felicia Sullivan [felicia@ltc.org] is director of community programming at Lowell Telecommunications Corporation (www.ltc.org), a community media and technology center in Lowell, Massachusetts. Her main interest is where media, technology and community intersect.

RESOURCES

Tools

Blogger (*www.blogger.com*)—A free online blog creation service.

Wiki's—(*www.wiki.org*)—Wiki is a piece of server software that allows users to freely create and edit Web page content using any Web browser. Wiki supports hyperlinks and has a simple text syntax for creating new pages and crosslinks between internal pages on the fly. LTC has used it for our strategic planning process and group brainstorming around it.

Bloglines (*www.bloglines.com*)—A free web-based tool that makes RSS aggregation as simple as webmail. Allows you to subscribe to blog feeds and easily post to other websites or blogs as an index or blog-roll.

FeedDemon/Shrook—(*www.feeddemon.com / www.shrook.com*)—News agreggators for PC and Macs. Able to accept all news feeds.

Models

Go Skokie—(*www.goskokie.com*)—a blog incorporated into a citywide portal site.

Cityvoices—(*http://cityvoices.ltc.org*)—a fairly new online community journal for Lowell, Massachusetts

Writings

We the Media: Grassroots Journalism by the People, for the People, by David Gilmour (O'Reilly, 2004)

Anarchist in the Library: How the Clash Between Freedom and Control is Hacking the Real World and Crashing the System, by Siva Vaidhyanathan (Basic Books, 2004)

Free Culture: How Big Media Uses Technology and the Law to Lock Down Culture and Control Creativity, by Lawrence Lessig (The Penguin Press, 2004, or online free at *www.free-culture.org*)

Second National Conference for Media Reform Seeks Session Proposals

The Second National Conference for Media Reform is set for May 13-15, 2005 in St. Louis, Missouri. Last year's conference was a major success, drawing nearly 1700 participants and featuring presentations by several members of Congress, FCC commissioners, world-famous musicians, renowned scholars, celebrities, and leading activists.

We are inviting proposals for sessions to be presented at the 2005 conference. We are seeking sessions that will galvanize the energy of our growing media reform movement and inspire participants to become more deeply involved in media activism and media policymaking. We are especially interested in effective organizing strategies and visionary and viable policy proposals.

Please see our Call for Sessions (CFS) document for more information and to propose a session. The document is attached to this email and is available for download at http://www.freepress.net/conference/cfs.php . The deadline for CFS submissions is October 15, 2004 at 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time.

Please share this CFS widely with others who may be interested in proposing a session.

Thanks for all of your contributions in the fight for a better media system. Looking forward to seeing you in St. Louis in May 2005!

Sincerely, Bob McChesney, Founder; Yolanda Hippensteele, Conference Coordinator; and Free Press

The Creation Machines: An Overview of Digital Tools and Technologies

BY NETTRICE R. GASKINS

Digital cameras, video servers, HDTV, software suites and other tools and technologies are becoming readily available for many producers. The latest buzz for what some people are calling the creation machines specifies things such as affordability, portability, integration, and remote accessibility. The challenge for many access and community media centers is keeping up with these new possibilities. To clarify these issues, I've grouped the digital processing technologies such as computers and related computer technologies separately from digital capturing and viewing technologies.

Digital Capturing and Viewing Technologies. Rapidly eclipsing the analog VHS and high-8 camera is the DV (digital video camcorder). For a few years now, manufacturers like Sony, Canon and Panasonic have marketed professional consumer-level cameras that are broadcast quality and more affordable than some of the higher-end analog counterparts. This includes formats such as DV, DVCAM and DVCPRO. Recently, JVC introduced the first HD (high definition) camcorder for the consumer. This revolutionary camcorder can squeeze a high definition picture onto mini-DV tape using MPEG-2 compression.

For many access and community media makers there are 3 CCD (chip) DV cameras available for around $4,000. The newer high-end cameras feature warm, friendly colors with film-like 24p and 30p frame rates, interchangeable lenses and microphone XLR inputs. Some of these cameras also have an analog to digital pass-through. This feature lets you record straight from analog sources (like Beta, SVHS, Hi-8 etc.) to your hard drive, using the camera as a real-time "converter."

Also, there are decent mid-range cameras that record broadcast quality images. These cameras are half the cost of the higher-end DV models but have fewer features like XLR input for audio. If you are planning on purchasing a separate DV deck for capture, consider purchasing an inexpensive one-chip camera to use as your capture/playback DV device. You might be giving up some of the speed of an expensive DV deck, but you'll save wear on your main camera, save a lot of money- and have a backup and second camera.

Access channels are getting lost in the shuffle and the challenge is negotiating agreements that are inclusive as far as the developing local digital cable/technology infrastructure to support these new technologies and services.

Next on the list for digital viewing technologies is HDTV. HDTV is high-resolution digital television (DTV) combined with Dolby Digital surround sound (AC-3). HDTV is the highest DTV resolution in the new set of standards. The ideas for high-definition television or HDTV came from wide-screen movies. Soon after wide-screen was introduced in movie theaters, producers discovered that having the screen occupy a great field of view significantly increased the sense of "being there." Following the introduction of HDTV to the film industry, interest began to build in developing an HDTV system for commercial broadcasting. Such a system would have roughly double the number of vertical and horizontal lines when compared to conventional systems.

There are commercial HDTV stations broadcasting in many large cities. The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has mandated that all stations be capable of broadcasting HDTV by 2006. The FCC mandate affects broadcasters, cable companies and audience members in significant ways:

Audience members have to buy new equipment, either a set-top box (to convert digital signals to analog signals) or a whole new TV set.

TV broadcasters have to spend a considerable amount of money to switch to HDTV. They have to buy new cameras, new titling and editing equipment, new tape machines, new rigs for their news vans—its a big investment.

Cable operators have to convert all of their equipment and all of their set-top boxes.

Communities need to agree to have new towers built for broadcast channels.

For access channels, there are serious implications of HDTV, digital cable and video on-demand services being offered by commercial cable companies like Comcast. Access channels are getting lost in the shuffle and the challenge is negotiating agreements that are inclusive as far as the developing local digital cable/technology infrastructure to support these new technologies and services.

Digital Processing Technologies. The computer is the basis of all digital processing technologies. It comes in all shapes, sizes and prices. Today, computers often come packaged with a suite of tools and applications making the average digital media maker's job easier. For example, Apple introduced its low-cost "iLife" suite including software for capturing and manipulating photos, video and audio. There will be more on software later. For the moment, this article concentrates on video servers and newer technologies driving broadcast.

Making the move to server-based video involves several things beyond the video server's encoder/decoder, storage and software. As cablecast managers move from videotape and more toward a tape-less production environment, the structures of these systems begin to take on the same dimensions as traditional broadcast, video-only systems-but without all the dedicated VTR decks, video switchers and physical videotape archives we've gotten accustomed to over the previous decades.

The basic building blocks of a compressed digital or tape-less video production appear similar: There is a means to

transfer field and studio material in the edit suite (or on the portable computer), then editing is completed, and finally the finished programs are sent for playback or distribution. This is where the similarity ends. Since the inception of non-destructive, nonlinear editing (NLE), which has signaled the eventual departure from analog or videotape production, the workflow and time necessary to complete a production has decreased dramatically. In turn, the cost to produce digital video has decreased as well. These two things, time and cost, continue to drive the development of server-based video.

In building a server-based video solution, there are four main components to consider: system/platform, storage, playback and switching. These components should be a part of every access or community media center's tech plan, if not now then in the near future.

Software. Software suites and integrated packages are being called the Swiss army knives of digital media production. They combine a number of different functions, such as basic nonlinear editing, titling, and audio composing from samples and loops, into a single package. As is true with the individual tools in a Swiss army knife, each part of an integrated package tends to be less powerful and flexible than its standalone counterpart. In some environments, however, the integrated approach might be preferred because of its inherent advantages. With the computer, the suite/package truly is a studio in a box.

Many stand-alone applications provide more power than the average producer needs. Few will ever use all of the features built into a top-of-the-line application such as Apple's Final Cut Pro. The basic tools should suffice in all but the most demanding scenarios.

A second and equally important issue related to the integrated approach is cost. An integrated package or suite often costs less than a single dedicated program that will perform only one of the tasks it accomplishes. What you sacrifice in power, you more than save in price—especially if you'll rarely use the more robust features that are the primary selling points of a high-end stand-alone application.

The secret to success, therefore, is to evaluate the capabilities of an integrated package, based on your digital production needs. Even server software applications can have multiple uses, i.e. for storage of programs and delivering content via the web.

Nettrice Gaskins [nettrice.gaskins@umb.edu] is director of the Commonwealth Broadband Collaborative, teaches for UMass Boston/College of Public and Community Service and is on the national board of CTCNet.

Smart Mobs: The Next Social Revolution

BY HOWARD RHEINGOLD
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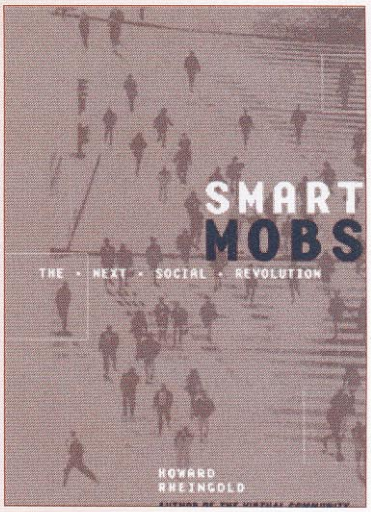


Smart mobs emerge when communication and computing technologies amplify human talents for cooperation. The impacts of smart mob technology already appear to be both beneficial and destructive, used by some of its earliest adopters to support democracy and by others to coordinate terrorist attacks. The technologies that are beginning to make smart mobs possible are mobile communication devices and pervasive computing—inexpensive microprocessors embedded in everyday objects and environments. Already, governments have fallen, youth subcultures have blossomed from Asia to Scandinavia, new industries have been born and older industries have launched furious counterattacks.

Street demonstrators in the 1999 anti-WTO protests used dynamically updated websites, cell-phones, and "swarming" tactics in the "battle of Seattle." A million Filipinos toppled President Estrada through public demonstrations organized through salvos of text messages.

The pieces of the puzzle are all around us now, but haven't joined together yet. The radio chips designed to replace barcodes on manufactured objects are part of it. Wireless Internet nodes in cafes, hotels, and neighborhoods are part of it. Millions of people who lend their computers to the search for extraterrestrial intelligence are part of it. The way buyers and sellers rate each other on Internet auction site eBay is part of it. Research by biologists, sociologists, and economists into the nature of cooperation offer explanatory frameworks. At least one key global business question is part of it—why is the Japanese company DoCoMo profiting from enhanced wireless Internet services, while US and European mobile telephony operators struggle to avoid failure?

The people who make up smart mobs cooperate in ways never before possible because they carry devices that possess both communication and computing capabilities. Their mobile devices connect them with other information devices in the environment as well as with other people's telephones. Dirt-cheap microprocessors embedded in everything from box tops to shoes are beginning to permeate furniture, buildings, neighborhoods, products with invisible intercommunicating smartifacts. When they connect the tangible objects and places of our daily lives with the Internet, hand-held communication media mutate into wearable remote control devices for the physical world.

Media cartels and government agencies are seeking to reimpose the regime of the broadcast era in which the customers of technology will be deprived of the power to create and left only with the power to consume. That power struggle is what the battles over file-sharing, copy-protection, regulation of the radio spectrum are about. Are the populations of tomorrow going to be users, like the PC owners and website creators who turned technology to widespread innovation? Or will they be consumers, constrained from innovation and locked into the technology and business models of the most powerful entrenched interests?

Convergence...and the Changing Landscape of Digital Media

BY NETTRICE R. GASKINS

There was a time not terribly long ago when access and community media centers didn't concern themselves too much about how people chose to produce media. We spent years logging, dubbing, and broadcasting thousands of hours of original and analog video and audio on a succession of tapes, cards, decks and drives. Today, a lot of the material is captured, stored and distributed in digital form using DV (digital video) cameras, computers, servers and even the Internet...often with the same computer-based system. Now, the production is taking place in homes, outside of our centers. In many ways, digital media is the shape of things to come, of the coming together of all forms of mediated communication in digital form.

For this article, an outline is useful to help organize and make sense of the dimensions and qualities of digital or new media. One approach is to map these developments by their primary function: production, distribution, display, and storage. Although this approach is limited by the convergence of media technologies and blurring various media functions, it is still useful to identify the distinguishing specifications of the converging digital media landscape.

Production. Production technologies refer to those used in the capturing and editing of media, i.e. video and audio. These technologies include computers, digital video cameras, scanners, and digital microphones. Digital production technologies have not only created new ways to capture or record media, but they have enabled producers to push beyond production to include nonlinear editing, compositing (layering several video and audio tracks), transitions, and special effects. These developments help solve new and old problems more rapidly and efficiently. On the other hand, these same technologies have sometimes alienated veteran producers, raised serious questions about fair-use and outpaced our ability to cope with the new possibilities.

It is debatable whether or not the "Flash" and fancier effects are necessary to produce a good TV program. However, digital production technologies have improved production values in many access and community media centers. In the past few years, non-destructive, nonlinear editing is quickly replacing analog editing in many centers, with varying outcomes. For some it requires a shift in skills, especially using computers and the learning curve for using some nonlinear applications is fairly high. For others, the cost of the software (Final Cut Pro, Avid) is prohibitive and some producers struggle with committing to a specific platform (Mac or PC). Final Cut Pro is only available on Apple Macintosh and most of the world uses windows-based PCs.

Recent developments in digital capture technologies are enabling producers to create programs in homes, as costs for digital equipment, computers, and software are lowering and becoming the tools that are more accessible. Digital microphones offer high quality for recording on digital media (less noise, wide frequency response, wide dynamic range). Also, producers are recording to mini-disc for a higher-quality sound.

These developments in digital production technologies offer community media centers ample opportunity to develop broader methods to produce and even distribute content.

Distribution. Distribution technologies refer to those used in the transmission of digital video and audio. Included are the six primary systems: over-the-air broadcasting, land-based telecommunications, coaxial cable, satellite, wireless, and electrical power lines. These technologies have both positive and negative cultural and commercial consequences. They have made content globally available. They have made video on demand, web streaming and distribution a practical reality.

In the past few years, three developments have revolutionized distribution: digital media, home theater, and broadband/wireless-fidelity (Wi-Fi). Home theater refers to the devices in the home that stream digital media from the computer, DVDs, or Internet to the TV or stereo. Also, devices such as personal computers, digital TV sets, digital video recorders, even PDAs and MP3 players come equipped to communicate wirelessly—rather than being wired more and more audience members are also becoming unwired.

Rapidly, access and community media centers are migrating from analog to DV tape to DVD and even tape-less video for distribution. Increasingly, we are experimenting with ways to distribute compressed, nearly full-frame and high-quality TV programs via the Internet using open-source, peer-to-peer Internet applications, i.e. BitTorrent. In this scenario, users connect to each other directly to send and receive portions of digital video and audio programs. The key philosophy of BitTorrent is that users should upload at the same time they are downloading. In this way, network bandwidth is shared, meaning it works better as the number of people interested in a certain program increases.

During the 2004 spring season, the Commonwealth Broadband Collaborative, made up of several access, community media and technology centers in northeastern Massachusetts, distributed their monthly *First Tuesday* TV/Web program via BitTorrent. Lowell Telecommunications Corporation (LTC), Cambridge Community Television, and the University of Massachusetts Boston lead this digital form of bicycling content. So far the fastest download time has been 1.5 hours for a 4 GB file or an hour-long program. Building a base of folks who can download and share bandwidth around the same time is key.

Display. Display devices refer to various technologies for presenting content to the audience member. They include devices for presenting content in a variety of formats such as digital video and audio. Many of these technologies are dependent to the technologies of distribution, production or storage, and are mentioned here only conceptually. A few

See **Convergence**, *page 27*

Stop Dubbing, Start Downloading: Take a Ride on the DigitalBicycle

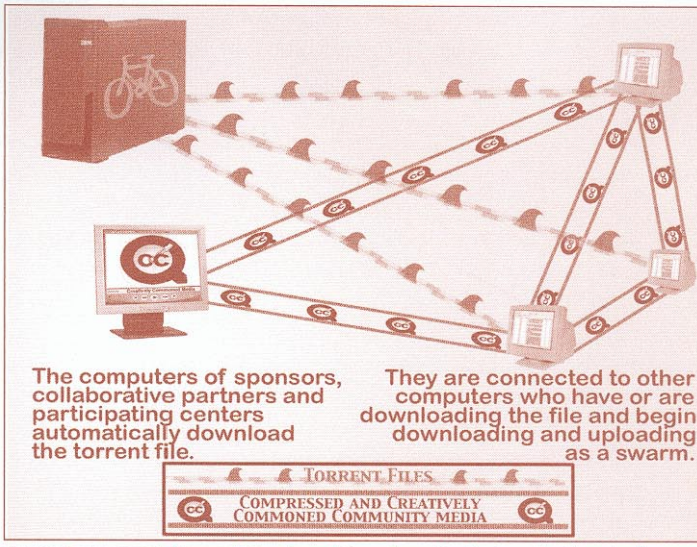
BY DANIELL KRAWCZYK

It's midnight in Massachusetts, 11:00 p.m. in Wisconsin, 10:00 in Colorado, and 9:00 in California. Computers across the country are waiting on a signal. Suddenly it comes, and these unmanned computers get to work. They 'automagically' connect to one another and begin receiving a one-hour program sent from your center, a program that hours before existed only on a timeline. Each computer simultaneously uploads and downloads, sharing the bits they have for the bits they don't, until each center has a complete copy; a copy they can import into a NLE, export to tape, burn to DVD, or cablecast directly. None of the centers involved have racks full of servers or connections faster than a T-1, just late-model computers with dedicated bandwidth running free software, but they are moving high-quality video files at amazing speeds. By the time the staff break for dinner the next day, last night's timeline is ready for tonight's playback. And the best part is, this isn't just the future of program bicycling; it's the near future.

Community media centers serve a number of roles. They act as educational institutions, as a community commons, as public spaces, as media creation points, and as distributors of content. Though these roles are manifested in numerous ways, the role of distribution is often tied directly to the asset and infrastructure that defines a PEG access center; the 6Mhz slices of cable bandwidth that connects centers to communities. This article will explore another form of distribution, one that uses peer-to-peer networking technology to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of our primary role of cablecasting locally relevant content. We will examine the way these technologies have transformed a similar community of media distributors, and how this can enable growth in both local involvement and better collaboration in our own centers.

Keep in mind that it is not unusual to feel uneasy with new technologies and distribution methods. For many, most of our funding comes from distributing local content over local cable. We may be afraid that incorporating other forms of distribution might undermine our most valuable resource and endanger our funding. Nothing proposed in this article will be a replacement for cablecasting, but eventually it will strengthen access centers, both individually and nationally, by enabling collaborations, increasing participation, and spurring production.

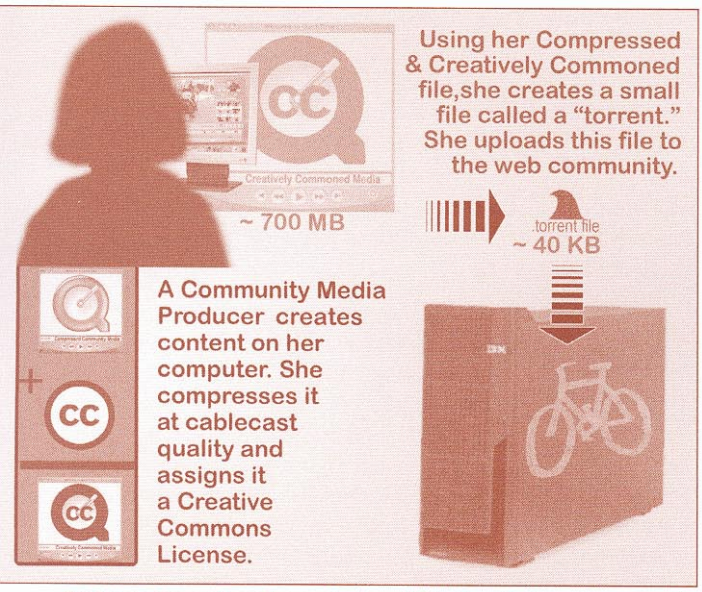
While our work must be always be rooted within our local communities, our success and future funding requires us to organize, collaborate, and dialogue with each other regularly. Our individual work is strengthened and supported through our membership in the Alliance and other regional and national partnerships. We share curriculum, policy, and experience, but although we are networked we are not a "television network". Yet, many centers have now incorporated satellite receivers to give them access to particular streams of programming. Moreover, most centers allow members to sponsor programs that have been "bicycled" in from other cities, and some centers are participating in distributed media collaborations.



Computers around the world can be set to automatically download content.

One such collaboration, the National Youth Media Access Project's Youth Channel confederation, serves as an example of the type of project that will greatly benefit from a peer-to-peer based distribution system. Centers who participate in the collaboration train young adults to be peer-trainers and form youth-run advisory boards. They also create a programming block showing media created by youth in the local community and the communities of partner centers. Through shared content, the participating centers are able to create dialog between youth that are interested in expanding their personal circles, and provide a forum for applied media literacy experience.

Despite the rewards of this and similar partnerships, participation is dependent of the amount of resources a center is able to expend. Dubbing tapes and stuffing envelopes takes time and costs money. When tapes arrive in the mail they need



Producers can easily make content available through the web community.

to be digitized, organized, curated, and edited into a program block before they can be cablecast. The number of tapes that each partner can dub and mail on a regular basis directly limits the size and scope of the collaboration.

Similar challenges face community media producers distributing their show to sponsors in multiple communities. The cost of dubbing and mailing can quickly exceed the total cost of production. Many producers who start with high hopes of having their show seen across the region, state, or nation, end up burned out, not always from the work of production, but from the high fiscal and time costs of distribution.

The distribution dilemma can be broken into two parts. First, though most productions are now created digitally they are still being distributed in physical, linear, formats. VHS, miniDV, and DVD, all take time to make and cost money to move. Second, the burden of distribution is placed upon the sender (the producer) instead of the receiver (the sponsor/collaborative partner). When the scope of distribution moves from five centers to twenty centers, the producer's cost (energy and resources) quadruple if they are shouldering the entire burden. However, if each center were able to make their own copy this would reduce the producer's time involvement and cost.

Examining the world of live music fans known as "Tape Traders" can show us a more effective distribution model. During the last few years, this group has primarily shifted from mailing recordings in padded envelopes in exchange for "Blanks and Postage," to distributing digital files online at no cost to sender or receiver. Having embraced the internet early on as a tool for finding one another and sharing information about shows, many now use the internet in place of the postal system for the actual trading.

The primary cost of sharing things over the internet is bandwidth. As websites offering large file downloads often find out the hard way, this cost can skyrocket if the file becomes very popular, very quickly. For this reason the backbone of the tape trader's systems is no longer FTP, but a new, peer-to-peer protocol called BitTorrent that combines the advantages of a centralized server (reliability, organization, and quality control) with the advantages of a decentralized network (the collective storage and bandwidth of thousands of users). When downloading a file using BitTorrent you become part of a swarm, simultaneously uploading the bits you have in exchange for the parts you don't. By using the otherwise unused bandwidth of the people who want the file to help spread the file around, the burden of bandwidth is also removed from the individual user.

All of the software used to run the web community, compress and decompress the live shows, and download the files is free and open source. Active members of the community provide the major resources of storage space and bandwidth automatically, at no additional cost to themselves. The cost of running the centralized servers that power the web community and direct the file transfers is small and usually covered by donations. The burden of making the first copy of the file available is still on the owner of the master tape, but after that the burden falls upon the other fans.

Due to the open-source nature of the software and number of programmers working to improve it, new ways of using it are consistently being implemented. Downhill Battle, a digital advocacy group in Worcester, Massachusetts, has been working to simplify the multi-step process of making the initial file available through a project called "BlogTorrent." Other projects focus on realizing the concept of "broadcatching" as proposed by Andrew Grumet, where combining BitTorrent with RSS will allow for the automated downloading of files that meet specified criteria. Adam Curry's "iPodder" project takes the idea one step further and after automatically downloading MP3's from trusted sources, loads them onto an iPod. The collective knowledge and idea base, expressed as blog entries and software, is benefiting everyone.

Since we're talking bits and bytes, the leap from audio to video is miniscule. Many tape traders are now exchanging video of live shows, and hundreds of parallel communities exist using similar systems to trade everything from grassroots activist video to entire series of commercial television programs, all in near-DVD quality. The Commonwealth Broadband Collaborative (CBC), a collaboration of community media and technology centers in Massachusetts, used such a system to distribute episodes of its program, *First Tuesday.*

While the combination of peer-to-peer networking and web communities has changed the dynamics of "tape trading," the impact it could have upon community media would be even greater. It promises more extensive collaboration between centers and individuals and increased local involvement. Such a system will not only enable current collaborations to communicate and share more effectively, but will spur the creation of new collaborations. Increased involvement can take place in numerous forms including members interested in curating their own programs and new producers spurred by the promise of a simpler syndication.

Implementing such a system is the initial focus of DigitalBicycle, a collaborative project started in January 2004 by LTC. It plans to integrate existing, proven, open-source technologies to produce a sustainable web community that can grow over time to meet the needs of community media and technology centers. Combined with user-friendly software on the desktop, it will facilitate participation by users with varying levels of technical expertise, allowing everyone to contribute to the system. Video will be compressed in a way that allows it to be easily imported into a NLE, burned to DVD, or processed for use with a media server. Plans are in place to launch a web community in the coming months and centers and individuals interested in getting involved should check out the project blog at *http://10speed.ltc.org.*

Daniell Krawczyk [daniell@ltc.org] is community programming coordinator at LTC in Lowell, Massachusetts.

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Resource Guide for Related Concepts, Communities & Technologies.

BitTorrent: BitTorrent is designed to facilitate the distribution of large files, which translates best to the transfer of large media files and software distributions. Contrary to other methods of online distribution such as FTP and web-based downloads, popular BitTorrent downloads are not likely to strain the host; rather, the greater the number of

See **Resource Guide**, *page 40*

New CTCNet Program Supports Teens' Use of Multimedia for Community Problem Solving

BY CORINNA MOEBIUS

Near East 149th Street and Westchester Avenue in the South Bronx, New York, local youth are preparing to take to the streets—with video cameras and tape recorders.

Their mission? To learn about the neighborhood where they live—and to play a role in transforming it for the better.

Taking the roles of urban planner and community developer, these young people will identify neighborhood needs by interviewing residents and business owners, noting the physical conditions of their environment, mapping local assets, and conducting additional research using newspapers, the U.S. Census and other online databases.

Then the young community builders will brainstorm for a solution to one of the needs they've identified, and will share their ideas in a multimedia presentation at a community meeting they plan and organize. They will even meet with local officials to educate them about their solution, demonstrating that young people can indeed be interested in civic affairs.

This year, CTCNet's new Youth Visions for Stronger Neighborhoods (Youth Visions) program (*www.ctcnet.org/youthvisions*) will make these civic engagement activities possible for young residents of eight different urban neighborhoods – including the South Bronx. The program, funded through the Corporation for National Service's Learn and Serve America program *(www.learnandserve.org)*, supports community technology centers that use their multimedia tools and training to engage youth (ages 12-18) in community decision-making.

CTCNet has created a Youth Visions curriculum and related educational materials for its eight grantees, who are encouraged to share their own ideas and adapt the curriculum to meet their unique needs. The curriculum teaches skills such as critical thinking, public speaking, personal and community asset mapping and media literacy. A Youth Visions extranet allows grantee and CTCNet staff to share documents online; participating youth can post journal entries and share comments about specific activities.

One of the grantees, the South Bronx Overall Economic Development Corporation (SoBRO), hopes to use Youth Visions to "cultivate a sense of pride for the Bronx," says SoBRO's Youth Visions Coordinator Andres Santiago. CTCNet awarded SoBRO and seven other sites over $175,000 total through the Youth Visions grant. "We're giving kids video cameras and sound recorders to capture the environment that they might otherwise take for granted," adds Santiago. "The culture of Hip Hop was born here: who knows what other movements will evolve with just a little help?"

SoBRO's Youth Development Center serves economically and educationally disadvantaged youth, who explore career/work options and gain literacy skills through courses, work programs, technology training and other activities.

The other seven Youth Visions sites for 2003-2004 include the Community TV Network (Chicago, IL); For Love of Children (Washington, DC); Lowell Telecommunications Corporation (Lowell, MA); Media Bridges (Cincinnati, OH); River City Youth Foundation (Austin, TX); Spy Hop Productions (Salt Lake City, UT) and Street-Level Youth Media (Chicago, IL). For more on the Youth Visions program and our grantees, please visit the CTCNet website at *www.ctcnet.org/youthvisions/*

Corinna Moebius of Bordercross Communications.is a CTCNet program consultant and principal.

This article first appeared in the Spring 2004 issueof "CTCNetwork News," CTCNet's organizational electronic newsletter (www.ctcnet.org/ctc_network_news/spring04/youth_visions.htm).

Convergence, *from page 24*

examples are personal digital appliances (PDAs), plasma or flat panel screens, and high definition television (HDTV). These technologies make it increasingly easy to view digital media while on the move. Laptops with high-resolution LCD screens are fast becoming part of the portable or field video studio. Additionally, high-resolution projection technologies are becoming cheaper and more readily available in the home, making for a high-quality home theater experience.

Storage. Storage technologies refer to devices used in housing digital content. Digital media storage has evolved, mostly in terms of capacity. Digital video is the most bandwidth-intensive of all digital content. For every 10 minutes of captured digital video 10-15 gigabytes (GB) of storage is needed. Not long ago, 20 GB external or portable hard drives were priced slightly under $300. Today, for the same cost, 250 GB can store over 3.5 hours of digital video. The prices for external hard drives are dropping dramatically making it much more affordable for individual producers.

Video or media servers are increasingly important storage technology for the development of television, including video on demand. Video servers are becoming the engines that will drive not only the availability of large archives of video and audio but also the emergence of tape-less TV networks. Access and community media centers will be able to use digital video servers to play back previously recorded programming and content, as well as support multiple productions at once.

The cultural and social implications of these recent developments still remain to be seen. What is clear is that access and community media centers are now beginning to address the challenges and look at effective ways to produce, distribute and store digital media, while maintaining their missions and the spirit of public access.

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Unwiring our Communities: Deploying Wireless to Improve Neighborhoods

BY DAVIS PARK

With the accelerated pace of technological changes on wireless connectivity, it is increasingly commonplace to see communities embracing new ways to access to the Internet's vast resources of information through wireless boxes. We're using wireless networks as strategies to promote economic and community development, forge relations with other organizations and small businesses, and increase telecommunications access to areas that most need it.

From the rural to urban, wireless networks are cropping up in small and big ways with projects as diverse as the communities they are serving. At the 2004 CTCNet conference in Seattle, I had the privilege and benefit of facilitating a panel on community wireless networks deployed in Philadelphia, Illinois, Boston and San Diego. We talked about how these little magic boxes are positively changing communities, delivering needed services, and developing new partnerships towards sustainability.

In Los Angeles, the Little Tokyo Service Center CDC has been using wireless solutions to deliver Internet access services to the historic Little Tokyo community just east of downtown, as a tool for community development and nonprofit support. We're now in the process of upgrading our network technologies to deliver more sophisticated services.

History of the Little Tokyo Wireless Project. LTSC CDC operates and administers the Asian and Pacific American Network (APANet), which formed in response to an important need for Internet access and technical support among local nonprofit organizations. In 1998, APANet established a wireless network in Little Tokyo that enabled local non-profits to split the costs of an expensive high-speed Internet connection with technical support from our Technology Advisory Committee (TAC).

Using early 802.11 wireless technology, the TAC group planned and installed the network equipment with minimal resources. While the 1.5 Mbps wireless connection speed may seem painful relative to today's 50 Mbps capabilities over 802.11g, it provided ample Internet connectivity to three Asian and Pacific American organizations in the Little Tokyo area.

At the 2004 CTCNet conference in Seattle...we talked about how these little magic boxes are positively changing communities, delivering needed services, and developing new partnerships towards sustainability.

The T1 Internet access also enabled APANet and LTSC CDC to host and manage servers for 10 websites, over 300 email accounts, and several email lists. This not only equipped nonprofit organizations with cutting-edge telecommunications technology, but also more importantly, enabled us to improve the quality of services to our clients in our respective communities.

The Search for Fiber. For years, LTSC CDC sought to access the miles of high-speed fiber that ran throughout the streets of downtown Los Angeles. We felt that access to such infrastructure would give Little Tokyo another important economic and community development tool to build housing, attract businesses, and improve social services. In this case, either the cost to tap into fiber was too expensive, or the companies that owned them were tight-lipped about the location of their fiber citing security reasons.

Out of a chance opportunity, no doubt also due to persistence, we connected with the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (DWP), which owned an extensive fiber network throughout the city, to upgrade our technology to better serve the low-income neighborhood of Little Tokyo and surrounding areas.

LTSC CDC's newest project, the Little Tokyo Wireless Project, upgrades the original Little Tokyo 802.11 wireless network to the 802.11b standard, connect the network through a free space optic (laser) backbone, and distribute these services to other local nonprofits with equipment supplied by DWP. The project circumvents high-fiber optic construction costs by linking the fiber optic connection to LTSC CDC's existing network, which distributes the high-bandwidth connection using a web of wireless signals throughout the community.

Lessons Learned. There were some shared themes that came out of the wireless conference panel in Seattle, as well as from our own experiences in Little Tokyo, as far as what makes a "successful" community wireless project.

PARTNERSHIPS—the development of a community wireless network project requires groups and agencies work together. Find some friends in the community, talk to other local groups and government offices, and remain persistent about the need for this project in your neighborhood.

COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDERS—a community wireless network will only be as successful or impactful as far as it is designed to meet the needs of the people it serves. Conduct surveys, focus group meetings, or develop a steering committee that is composed of stakeholders and the direct beneficiaries of the project.

GET VOLUNTEERS INVOLVED—no one single person will have all the technical answers, so assemble a team of techheads and wireless wonks to help draw up and implement your plan...these are the magicians who'll help you pull resources and ideas out of their bags of tricks...just don't forget to feed them well.

You can access information and other materials presented at the CTCNet "Unwiring our Communities" conference panel at *www.ctcnet.org.*

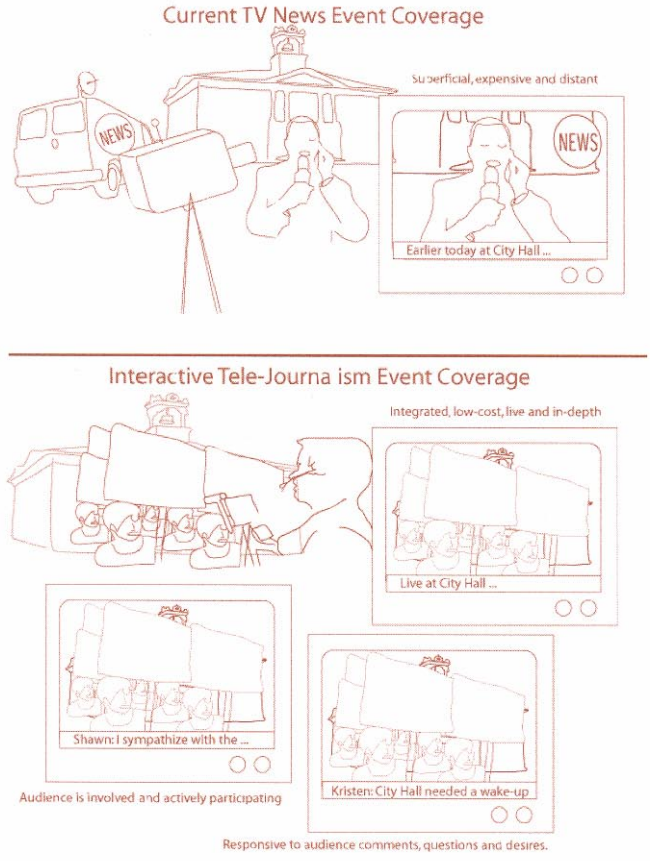
Davis Park is DISKovery Center program director, Little Tokyo Service Center Community Development Corporation.

The Open Content Evolution

By Kenyatta Cheese

When musician Colin Mutchler wanted to release his acoustic guitar track, "My Life," he wanted to see what other artists would do with it, so he posted his song as an MP3 to the website *opsound.org* and published it using a Creative Commons license, effectively inviting everyone to do something interesting with it—as long as they agree to release their track with the same permissions. Within a month, a violinist named Cora Beth, who had never once met Colin, took the song and added a violin track to it, renaming it "My Life Changed." And Colin is more than happy with the results. "I think the track is definitely more beautiful now," says Colin, "Maybe eventually we'll add drums and words."

People are embracing the open source movement as a way to enable new levels of collaboration, evolve ideas, and ultimately transform not only the way we make media but how we distribute it and how users ultimately participate in it.



The Interactive Tele-Journalism project allows direct audience involvement.

Put simply, "open source" describes any project that allows for the following: free redistribution of its work, allows anyone to make modifications or derivatives of its work, does not discriminate against persons or groups, and does not restrict its use in conjunction with other work. It's a work methodology that stresses the openness of the creative process, backed up with licensing that explicitly promotes the widespread distribution of the work, free of charge.

When most people think of open source they think of computers. One of the most important movements within computer science, the open source software movement has created some of the most widely used applications today—applications like the Linux operating system, the Mozilla web browser, and the Apache web server software which powers over half of the world's web pages. What makes this software succeed isn't necessarily the genius of their programmers but the terms under which it is licensed and distributed. By producing this software under open source licenses, it allows programmers and users alike to contribute improvements, squash bugs, and enjoy a level of independence by relying on the power of the community instead of the economic health of a single software vendor.

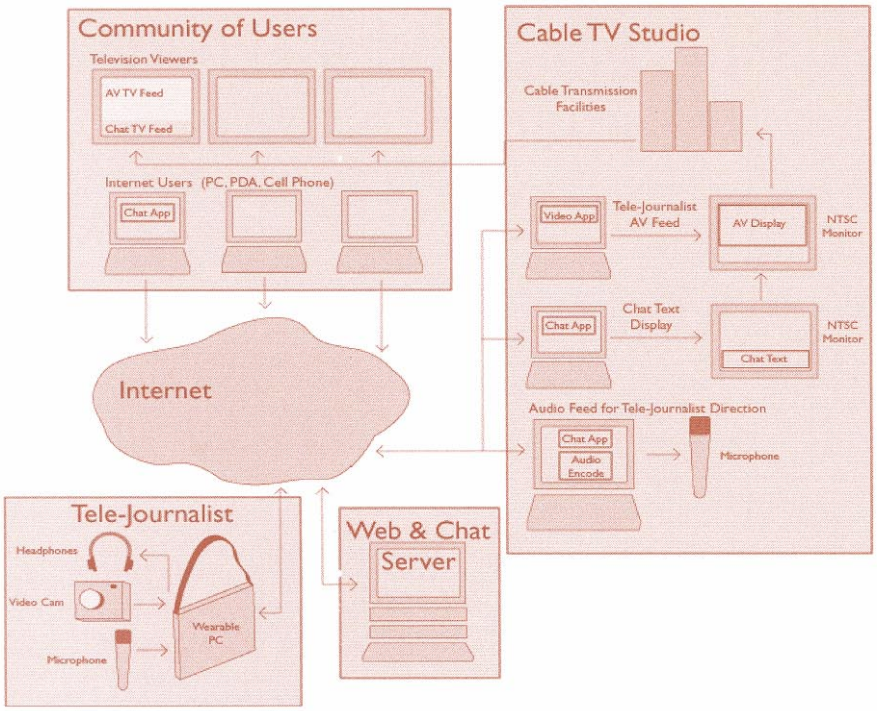
But open source is not just about software. Millions of people everywhere are using the open source model in media, allowing people to redistribute and create derivatives of their words, photos, audio, and video with an "open content" license similar to that of open source. By combining this open content with media-making tools that take advantage of the network (blogs, video and audio editing applications, and playlist generators) users are changing the way that we make and curate media, and allow people to remix, collaborate, and expand upon the work of others like never before.

If any of this seems a wee bit familiar to you, it should. The idea that a group of people with common interests could come together to work on something is not new to us. Community media has known "open source" and "open content" processes for a while, although we've called it things like "media collectives" and "public domain." Our early involvement in the open source movement can be seen in the open collaboration projects of the 1960s and 1970s. While computer programmers in places like UC-Berkeley, Bell Labs, and MIT worked in environments that promoted the free exchange of software they had written (allowing them to fulfill the hacker credo of "pushing the limits of the do-able"), projects like the Alternative Media Center at NYU, Open Channel, and Global Village showed people that collaborating on video and film productions could yield greater results than working alone. While the products of their work may have seemed different at the time, both movements still shared common thinkers like Marshall McLuhan and Jean Baudrillard.

As the economic pressures of the 1970s and 1980s bared down on both the community media and open software movements, their paths split. While community media found legislation as a way to help determine its future (public access), the business world picked up on the profitability of computing and sent the programmers on a path of entrepreneurship that traded in the idealism of the "free software" movement for an Ayn Rand-style pragmatism still seen in geek culture to this day. Open source still existed, but the driving force became less about community and more about self-interest.

During the telecommunications and dot-com boom of the 1990s, a computer world flush with money began thinking less about return-on-investment and more about making a "contribution" to the internet world. More times than often, they ended up being one in the same. (Who needs to think about money when everything is profitable?)

Programmers dedicated to open source projects took advantage of the network (the internet) and learned to collaborate on software projects across cultures and



The Interactive Tele-Journalism project uses the internet for two-way communication.

across languages. The network lent itself to such collaboration—projects could be hosted on websites and source files weren't so unwieldy that they couldn't be transferred in a reasonable amount of time across a 56k modem connection. It was during this time that the computing world saw an explosion in the number and variety of software projects calling themselves "open source." Everyone wanted to learn how to leverage the network for their projects—and why not? Linux made the technology and business headlines daily and money was being poured into any business plan with "open source" in its model. Open source software seemed to be a success.

Meanwhile, networked-based media still had a ways to go. Audio and video media files were large and unwieldy. Because of the state of digital encoding and slow modem speeds at the time, a 30-minute video program could still take up to three days to transfer over the internet. Despite the success of open source software, and the relative success of early collaborative media distribution projects like indymedia.org, audio and video media production was still not ready for network collaboration.

Flash forward to the current decade, where an audio file can be transferred faster than you can say the word "Napster." Technologies like QuickTime, mp3, MPEG4, and Windows Media allow 30-minute programs to fit on a USB key drive the size of your thumb. Cable modems and DSL lines transfer files up to 100 times faster than 56k. The advent of peer-to-peer (P2P) file sharing means that you no longer need a web server with an expensive bandwidth connection in order to distribute a file. (When you download a file off of a P2P network, you automatically help redistribute that file.) The tools had grown to support the sharing of media and the tools and processes were being assembled to support it.

Now people are using P2P networks to trade media, share homegrown remixes, and distribute original content to the world. End users, not just media makers, are distributing media to the point where it now accounts for a steady 70 percent of the world's internet traffic. But while this has been wonderful for the end-users, the commercial content providers have had a less than stellar time of it. Most of the content being shared on P2P networks is theirs, and it's all been published with closed content licensing. Legally, it shouldn't be out there.

Both Hollywood and the music industry have built an entire industry not on the creation of media but on its duplication. While P2P networks are built to promote widespread sharing and distribution of media, Hollywood makes their money off of controlling who gets to see their media and when. As a result, commercial content makers have taken to suing thousands of people and threatening millions more. It's a heavy-handed tactic, but they have yet to come up with an innovative way of dealing with this disconnect. All of this would be less of a problem, of course, if the media people were sharing was originally distributed with an open content license.

Fortunately, not all groups are interested in holding back the proliferation of their work. Community media has traditionally placed a higher value on maximizing the reach of their work over its commercial viability. Most community media producers would welcome the widespread proliferation of their work. While some producers see community media as a stepping stone towards earning their Emmy, most are attracted to cable access television and community radio as a way to exercise their First Amendment rights.

But despite this, the majority of content on public access is distributed with licenses of copyright and not copyleft. Most producers are unaware that alternative licensing is out there and fairly easy to understand. Groups like Creative Commons (*www.creativecommons.org*) provide a number of simple, easy to read open content licenses that allow for reasonable levels of use permissions without necessarily giving up all rights as an author, perfect for the producer of a public access program looking to make their voice heard.

It would be quite simple for a community media center to download Creative Commons licenses from the web and create posters that explain all of the options available to a media producer. Copies could be distributed and explained whenever someone new signs up for a show.

By using open content licensing in their work, producers create the opportunity that their ideas will be heard beyond their primary audiences. By promoting the use of open content licensing among their producers, community media centers create the possibility that producers' monologues get turned into dialogue.

Producers more interested in making their work completely free, can use the open content license put forth by the Open Source Initiative (*www.opensource.org*) or continue issuing their work in the public domain.

Besides individual artists like Colin Mutchler and media collectives like indymedia, people unfamiliar with the community media movement have taken an interest in open content. People like J.D. Lasica

and Marc Canter, founders of open-media.org, and Jeff Jarvis, proponent of the Center for Citizens' Media, have seen what open source can do for the computer science world. Now they want to see the same processes applied to the media. They've started projects that promote the creation and proliferation of grassroots media using the internet as its medium. In the process, they've attracted scores of people who weren't otherwise familiar with community media.

Another important aspect of the work of new groups like open-media.org is that they're attracting computer programmers capable of building the tools necessary to take advantage of open content licensing and P2P networks. While pioneering net-based media collaboration projects like Michael Eisenmenger's Indymedia Global Video Exchange used centralized servers to store and share media, more recent tools like BitTorrent allow people to share and distribute media without the need of large file servers with lots of bandwidth.

By encoding a video file on your home computer and uploading a pointer to that file to a BitTorrent tracker like DV Guide (*http://dv.open4all.info/*) you can use your unused home cable modem bandwidth to share your media with anyone who wants to see it. Applications like webjay (*http://webjay.org/*) allow users to create playlists of their favorite internet audio and video files, creating thousands of micro-channels of content. New projects like the DigitalBicycle out of LTC in Lowell, Massachusetts (*http://10speed.ltc.org*) look to provide a more community media-centric approach to things like webjay and the DV Guide project, making it easier for centers to share and distribute programming via the P2P networks instead of "bicycling" tapes. All of this starts to shape a world where media production and distribution can easily bypass traditional media networks and reach audiences potentially in the billions.

Ultimately, community media's involvement in open licensing and networked media tools shouldn't end in finding new sources of footage and easy distribution. Tools that empower the media makers also empower the audience, and their proper use and deployment allow us to close the feedback loop started when the first community media projects began over 40 years ago.

One of the early goals of community media was to create a safe space for dialogue among the community. For years, that meant providing a space for people to make themselves heard through things like cable television broadcasts. But television is a one-way technology. The soap box only enables one half of the conversation. There also needs to be a way to enable the community to talk back to their broadcasts, hopefully in a respectful, responsible manner.

Internet-based communications tools like instant messaging, text messaging, and video chat continue the conversation started by live call-in shows by providing a way to interact both with their media and each other. By incorporating these tools into television broadcasts both live and taped (squeezed into the corner through a digital video effect), centers give the community a place to comment on the work they see. Language filtering, user registration, and abuse blocking will allow centers to a add a level of responsibility hard to maintain with live phone call-ins.

Projects like Shawn Van Every's Interactive Tele-Journalism project (*www.walking-productions.com/itj/*) enable audiences to enter a conversation with the media maker, asking questions and leaving comments in live interview situations, while programs like *BrowseTV* (*http://browsetv.net/*) use video chat to engage audiences and allow them to help assemble the content of the video program on the fly.

By providing an environment where anyone can take video and audio from a program, remix it, comment on it, and make it their own, centers can enable audiences to gain more control over what they see and transform themselves from passive consumers of media to active participants in the media that they use.

The mediasphere is quickly evolving from an industrial-era hierarchy of producers and consumers to a nodal world of end users with varying levels of participation. These users have started taking control of what media they see, when they see it, and what they share with their community. Traditional media has been slow to respond to this, marrying themselves to content licensing and business models built for a world based on atoms and not bits. In the meantime, community media finds themselves in a world of open content, open tools, and new relationships, giving them the opportunity to finally use technology that mirror the values they already share.

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Resources for the Open Content Evolution

Although the idea of open content isn't new to community media, many of the resources are. Here's a simple cheat sheet of resources:

Open Content Licensing:

- Creative Commons (*http://creativecommons.org/*)—Provides easy to use, easy to understand open content licensing for media makers.
- Open Source Initiative (*http://www.opensource.org*)—A nonprofit corporation dedicated to managing and promoting open source within the community. Providers of the Open Content License.

Open Content Tools:

- BitTorrent (*http://bitconjurer.org/BitTorrent/*) P2P software built for sharing large media files.
- DigitalBicycle (*http://10speed.ltc.org*) A platform for sharing content among community media centers using the internet.
- DV Guide (*http://dv.open4all.info*) A platform for sharing content outside of mainstream media outlets.
- Indymedia (*www.indymedia.org*) A network of collectively run media outlets for the creation of alternative media.
- Interactive Tele-Journalism Project (*www.walking-productions.com/itj/*) A system that allows users to interact with journalists in live interview situations.
- Webjay (*http://webjay.org/*) A platform for the creation and sharing of media playlists

Proponents of Process:

- Marc Canter (*http://marc.blogs.it/*)
- Jay Dedman (*http://momentshowing.typepad.com/*)
- Jeff Jarvis (*www.buzzmachine.com/*)
- J.D. Lasica (*www.newmediamusings.com/blog/*)

Creative Commons: New Licensing, New Opportunities for Community Media

BY JASON DANIELS

Is there a way to provide more opportunities for the sharing and distribution of content to members of community media centers? What would such a change require?

This article outlines how a community media center can realize new opportunities for distributing its members' content. The transformation is broken down into two parts—why and how. Why this is a good idea, and how to prepare the facility and educate the members. This article will not debate different pieces of equipment but point toward one website in particular, *www.creativecommons.org*. The Creative Commons is a new, free licensing standard that simplifies copyright and provides more opportunity for sharing content. Sharing is what community media is all about. The following will illustrate this integration.

The interest exists from producers to reach a broader audience. Using three programs from the current rotation at our center as examples, a Cambodian health program, a cooking show, and a video art exhibition, these all could indeed benefit from a wider audience. Beyond demand there is a practical reason to embrace the Creative Commons. Most producers consider copyright as the sole option for protection over their work. This is sensible because it ensures it from misuse, even though it may be hard to enforce. However, it is debilitating because it makes the distribution the burden of the producer. Copyleft and copyright free are informal ways to license content for wider distribution, yet these provide no protection. If there were an effective way to manage intellectual property rights while opening up access to local content for distribution it could become a new community media licensing standard.

Enter the Creative Commons (CC), which nourishes a community "founded upon the notion that some people may not want to exercise all of their intellectual property rights the law affords them." So is the case with community media where "some rights reserved" is often more appropriate than "all rights reserved." Community media producers seek the proper attribution for their work but generally do not seek any capital return on their current programs. Conditions within the license could encourage the free sampling of a short segment (one recipe or a segment about smoking) or restrict it. Traditional copyright does nothing to clarify these issues while CC addresses them head on.

Creative Commons is easy, free and legally pertinent. It covers the spectrum of media: still and moving images, audio, text and most importantly internet content. Choosing an appropriate license occurs at their website, *www.creativecommons.org*. The license is generated and then manually placed at the end of a document or within content that will be shared via the internet. The license lets everyone know under what conditions the content can be used, reused and further disseminated. If the center has access to the internet than there are phenomenal prospects for sharing content, but either way, the license is still a more accurate reflection of the rights exercised by the producer.

Then there is the how. There are two parts to preparing a community media center for the use of Creative Commons licensing: preparing the facility and educating the members.

Preparation of the facility begins by increasing the visibility with a Creative Commons Campaign. The Creative Commons does a very good job explaining themselves using Flash movies on their website. Translate this information into posters placed in the editing suites and put flyers up on the walls. Direct members to the website. Creating a folder on the desktop of computers containing licenses, logos and relevant media would also prove useful.

Since the primary content created at a media center is video, licenses need to be tailored for that medium. For those editing digitally, a still image (see sidebar) or a short QuickTime movie containing the license could be inserted at the end or beginning of a program. These could be handed out *en masse* on a compact disc, made available from your center's website as a zip file, or all stored in a folder on the desktop. For those still working tape-to-tape, this video could be put on a tape and stored next to the color bars and disclaimer in the analog edit suite. Additionally, the Creative Commons has created their own search engine as well as a browser

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To view a copy of this license visit http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/2.0/ or send a letter to Creative Commons, 559 Nathan Abbott Way, Stanford, California 94305, USA.

Example of still image for credits in video: ccommons template.tiff

WHO STARTED CREATIVE COMMONS?

Cyberlaw and intellectual property experts James Boyle, Michael Carroll, and Lawrence Lessig, MIT computer science professor Hal Abelson, lawyer-turned-documentary filmmaker-turned-cyberlaw expert Eric Saltzman, and public domain Web publisher Eric Eldred founded Creative Commons in 2001. Fellows and students at the Berkman Center for Internet & Society at Harvard Law School helped get the project off the ground. Creative Commons is now based at and receives generous support from Stanford Law School, where it shares space, staff, and inspiration with the Stanford Law School Center for Internet and Society.

from: *http://creativecommons.org/faq#faq_entry_3312*

plug-in to help find content online that utilizes its license.

Bringing the Creative Commons into the consciousness of the membership poses many exciting opportunities. Certainly, making mention of the possibility of increased distribution of their program will raise a few ears. This kind of comment might be appropriate at an orientation. As most centers have internet access and a copy of Quicktime Pro ($30), videos can be compressed for and shared through the web. A demonstration of this process is invaluable. Showing members the potential of this kind of licensing may also occur in a one-on-one setting. A small handout and the compact disc mentioned above can be on hand so that they can get right to work in bringing their content to expanded audiences.

Classes designed around the CC are open ended. These would begin to explore the power of this license employed in conjunction with the internet. For instance, *archive.org* has a special section dedicated to moving images. These movies are free and downloadable and even editable in video editing software. The class is broken down into searching, downloading and editing. At our center we have aired hour-long programs created entirely with footage from these archives. Viewing these films themselves is an exercise in media literacy. This kind of class would engage members in how dynamic the internet is as a tool for sharing video. It is the creative commons licensing that makes this possible.

Larger, more collaborative projects also come into focus. Imagine a website as a portal to a digital reservoir of local content, searchable by region or subject. Not only do we download videos from this place, but we also become contributors. A central location to access this material streamlines the process. Once again, open licensing is the first step towards the fulfillment of great promises. Programs like the cooking show or the Cambodian health program are uploaded and downloaded in their entirety. Alternatively, centers can begin to garner old deteriorating VHS and 3/4-inch tapes and preserve them in an electronic format. This sort of analog archaeology adds to our collective culture and history.

Creative Commons licenses cultivate an opportunity for community media centers to embrace new technology for the benefit of its members. These new changes merge with existing technology and strengthen the organization's ability to fulfill its mission. New instruments for sharing content already exist and powerful licensing standards that utilize this technology have been invented. This article has hopefully laid out a starting point for their implementation.

Jason Daniels [jason@ltc.org] is media services manager at Lowell Telecommunications Corporation and also a video artist.

Segments of the article were taken from the Creative Commons website.

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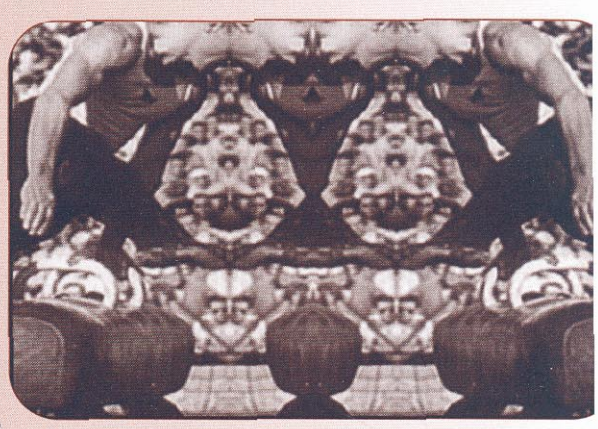
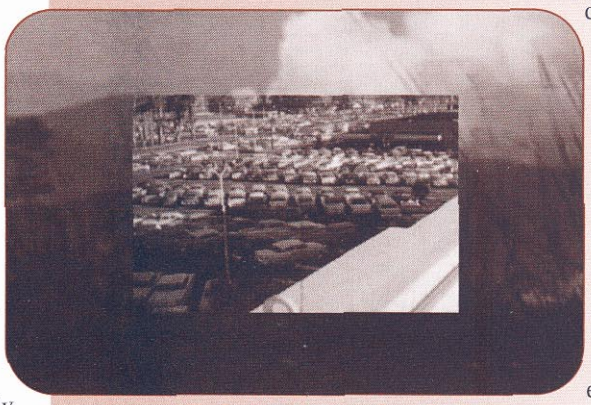
Prelinger Archives

http://www.archive.org/movies/prelinger.php

Prelinger Archives was founded in 1983 by Rick Prelinger in New York City. Over the next 20 years, it grew into a collection of over 48,000 "ephemeral" (advertising, educational, industrial, and amateur) films. In 2002, the film collection was acquired by the Library of Congress, Motion Picture, Broadcasting and Recorded Sound Division. Prelinger Archives remains in existence, holding approximately 4,000 titles on videotape and a smaller collection of film materials acquired subsequent to the Library of Congress transaction. Its goal remains to collect, preserve, and facilitate access to films of historic significance that haven't been collected elsewhere. Included are films produced by and for many hundreds of important US corporations, nonprofit organizations, trade associations, community and interest groups, and educational institutions. Getty Images represents the collection for stock footage sale, and some 1,600 (soon to be 2,000) key titles are available here. The collection currently contains over 10 percent of the total production of ephemeral films between 1927 and 1987, and it may be the most complete and varied collection in existence of films from these poorly preserved genres.



Video still of edited footage from Prelinger



Video still of edited footage from Prelinger

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Emerging, Converging, Empowering

BY FRED JOHNSON

Introduction: This article is a set of extended notes that have come out of a year of workshops, and an on-going dialogue with colleagues and friends about global solidarity and seeing local media and technology initiatives inclusively. You can learn more about the workshops and colleagues at www.mwg.org/emergence *and* www.cpcs.umb.edu/cmt. *I specially want to thank Patricia Dair for sharing her wide, community-based information development experience with me; particularly for hammering home the insight that organizations with converging missions rarely converge if they have divergent funding sources.*

This ain't your granny's, or your mother's, media environment we are living in; and it isn't even remotely like the environment that spawned the cable access movement in the '70s, or the computer technology movements of the early '90s.

Emergence

The global communication system now taking shape is radically different from the top-down, hierarchical mass communication and entertainment systems we are familiar with in the post-war era. It should be clear by now to everyone we are in the midst of a massive transformation of media culture globally. This ain't your granny's, or your mother's, media environment we are living in; and it isn't even remotely like the environment that spawned the cable access movement in the '70s, or the computer technology movements of the early '90s.

We are way beyond all that now. The future is crashing headlong into our homes and offices and, yeah, this has far reaching consequences for anyone involved in alternative media and media focused on social change and development. Indeed, the mediasphere has shifted so radically that terms like community and alternative media can take on new, disempowering meanings in the present media environment. These concepts may not be capable of carrying the freight of social change. They require careful re-examination in the light of our social values.

What is emerging is a hyper-commercialized and out of control media environment, both technically and in terms of government oversight. Certainly, the processes of globalization, particularly computer-based communication technology and global media re-de-regulations, favor mega-corporations over the communications rights of the populations of the world. And, certainly, the hyper-commercialized media we have now are a social problem, not a solution to anything, despite the lame arguments of their apologists in journalism.

But that's just the first layer of implication in this new, immersive media environment. Highly competitive, "market-driven" media are incapable, in the absence of policies that mandate social outcomes, of delivering anything but the cultural equivalent of fast food. The infrastructure and editorial structure of our present commercial media system are organized in more of a commercial web of information flows. Consequently there are far fewer editorial restraints, no tweedy intellectuals sitting in New York or Boston puffing pipes and protecting the masses from mind pollution by exercising the electronic media editorial equivalent of 19th century 'noblesse oblige.' Those days are over, and despite the fact that we lost some public interest regulations, we can say good riddance to this kind of cultural domination. They were ineffectual and elitist. Now, if you are a commercial player, there are more inputs unencumbered by any social responsibilities or sense of consequences, and more feedback capability—if you possess the right combination of money, power and ideology. Poor people, regions and nations, and those of us interested media with social values have been hardwired out of the system, and into it as passive consumers.

One outcome that has arrived early is media fragmentation. The audience for mainstream media is not converging, it is diverging. There really are no longer any truly mass audiences, which calls into question the terms of community and alternative media. They just don't mean the same thing in a fragmented media audience. According to communications geographer and sociologist, Manuel Castells, the new media "determine a segmented, differentiated audience that, although massive in terms of numbers, is no longer a mass audience in terms of the simultaneity and uniformity of the message it receives." Now, the audience as well as the images and sounds of media can come from anywhere, be spun and re-packaged in multiple formats and time shifted globally. The only gatekeeper is cash, so let the games begin. The media can't help themselves; the system is now highly prone to storms of ratings-driven scandal and unimaginable moral panics that cascade into our homes and offices in the form of lurid tabloid aesthetics and sensationalism. These are systemic problems in media, not individual failings. How long are they going to be able to resist running the beheadings, and how long are you going to be able to resist watching? Remember, quoting Mark Crispin Miller, "Big Brother is you watching."

The media-saturated culture is an expression of what science fiction writer Bruce Sterling tags the "military-entertainment complex," a powerful new restructuring of the old "military industrial complex" reflecting the strategic centrality of telecom infrastructure and global media culture to globalization, and the needs of the powerful in their efforts to remain so. Beyond that, it is difficult to predict many outcomes for this radical restructuring in any but the largest frameworks. The power[full] are not in control of these processes really, they are just using their disproportionate

social power to maintain their dominant positions in social and technical processes they barely understand, let alone control. It would be a strategic mistake to think any outcomes are predetermined, I said any outcomes—including a new democratic media of resistance, innovation and justice that is far more desirable and robust than the marginalized alternative media we now have.

Divergence and Convergence:

Technically the media is converging. The distinguishing technical features of the new media system are multimedia [text, images and sound combined] and computer assisted interactivity—each a function of making media digital. Discrete media—film, electronic media, print—are becoming common flows of digitized 'content', transported through an interactive communication infrastructure for end-use with digital information appliances and software applications.

But it is important not to get caught up in the rhetoric of convergence. As mentioned before, the audience for mainstream media is fragmenting. And many other social things, like people, organizations, regions, nations, cities and economies, are involved in all sorts of transformations—diverging, subdividing, de-re-territorializing, partnering, splintering, breaking down, dissolving—that surely do not look like convergence of any sort. In fact the flexibility of networked organizations and information tech allow things to fly apart perhaps more easily than to come together. This is not an age of convergence; this is a time of transformation.

This is not an age of convergence; this is a time of transformation.

At social transition points, media and organizational forms become hybrid, hierarchies break down, clear understanding of the relationships between things like private and nonprofit organizations is difficult to maintain. New hybrid media formats like web streaming, flash animated websites and videos and much more, seem to be evolving ahead of their ultimate delivery system, hinting entirely new media forms, while wireless and enhanced/interactive television foreshadow emerging media distribution structures.

Think about the evolving forms of local media and technology centers: media arts centers, community technology centers, community media centers, community multimedia centers, indymedia centers, cybercafes, cyberarts centers, telecenters, community radio stations, web radio. And along with these local sites come a profusion national advocacy and professional groups. Take a deep breath: NAMAC, ACM, CTCNet, AIVF, NFCB, Free Press, the Center for Digital Democracy, Libraries for the Future and more, more, more. All of these centers and organizations have vastly different organizational cultures driven by unique histories and funding sources, from foundations and memberships to national, state and local government. This is an exploding galaxy of public media practice not convergence.

Empowerment

If you focus on social and cultural practices, rather than organizations or technology, things become a little more transparent. As groups have begun exploiting the potential of digital media and info tech for social purposes, converging media empowerment strategies, aesthetics and development activities are showing up from divergent places or sites around the globe. In some cases, entirely new but similar media forms of expression and presentation are evolving independently and simultaneously.

It is a global phenomenon. The UN through UNESCO has acknowledged this explicitly when it identified Community Multimedia Centres (CMCs) as a key strategy in achieving its Millennium Development Goals. UNESCO and the World Summit on the Information Society state that, "CMCs promote community empowerment and address the digital divide by combining community media with the Internet and related technologies." The UN offers the CMC Programme as a "global strategy for addressing the digital divide in the poorest communities of the developing world and also among countries in transition. The CMC opens a gateway to active membership of the global knowledge society by making information and communication the basic tools of the poor in improving their own lives."

Networked local media centers may be creating the global spaces that can potentially challenge the radical displacements of globalization. Despite the vast power of commercial media and telecom, it is not utopian to think that community media centers that are both globally and locally connected might be a counter balance to the locally disconnected techno-elites that are globally connected only to their own power centers.

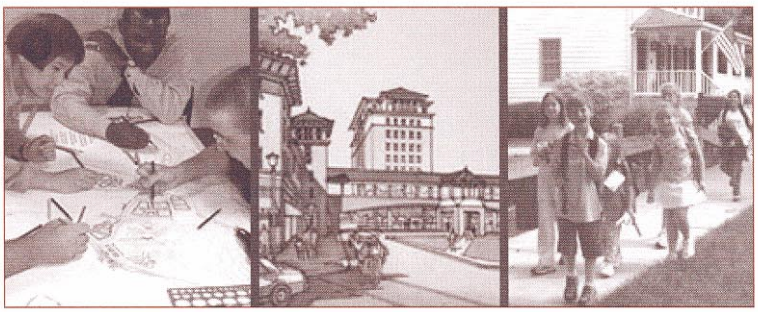
"Solidarity in a globalized world means global solidarity"

So should all the community-based media and tech around the world try to merge into one big global organization of local media centers in order to strengthen communication rights, and build alternative global media from a civil society perspective; or perhaps at least nationally? Probably neither. But we can use the global media networks to do what they were designed to do: Set up highly flexible cooperative and collaborative networks that allow organizations to rapidly adapt to changing circumstances; networks that are at once centralized and decentralized, that don't need a geographic center for coordination, and that are capable of facilitating myriad rapidly changing projects and initiatives.

We can recognize and act on our unique potential to be agents of progressive social change by organizing or supporting "local" activists, neighborhoods, grassroots groups, regions and communities—in their efforts to "jump the scales" of local politics and transcend political borders; to move between the local and the global; to gain voice and make connections with other "local" actors who share similar or complementary objectives and political projects. And we can give up any simple, romantic notions we might have of 'community' and acknowledge that communities are not idealized social spaces separate from the un-democratic politics we experience nationally and globally. Those kinds of communities never really existed, or if they did they were a long time gone.

Fred Johnson is co-director of the Community Media and Technology Program in Umass, Boston's College of Public and Community Service. He is also a co-founder of Media Working Group Inc.

BY DIRK KONING



To learn more about the charette process, visit *www.charretteinstitute.org/*

FACILITY DESIGN: Space as Legacy

In the past 25 years I've loosely calculated that I've been in over 500 media centers, CMC's, ICT, CTC's and PEG centers. The unfortunate thing is I remember very little about most of them. Yes, the synapses don't fire like they use to and the memory is fuzzy, but the point is that very few media centers have considered space as a component of mission. Few centers have true character or memorable design features.

Granted we haven't had the luxury of limitless funding in building our centers, but even basic and rudimentary notions of space as a catalyst for building community have been ignored. How can space support our mission? How can space welcome people? How can space speak to our principles? How can a facility build community?

In the late 19th and early 20th century, Andrew Carnegie decided to leave a legacy by funding the construction of almost 2000 public libraries across the country. These were not just vanilla boxes that held books; these were consciously determined to be fundamental community structures that celebrated learning. "Americans first entered the worlds of information and imagination offered by reading when they walked through the front doors of a Carnegie library. One of 19th-century industrialist Andrew Carnegie's many philanthropies; these libraries entertained and educated millions. Between 1886 and 1919, Carnegie's donations of more than $40 million paid for 1,679 new library buildings in communities large and small across America. Many still serve as civic centers, continuing in their original roles or fulfilling new ones as museums, offices, or restaurants." Because of his background, Carnegie was particularly interested in public libraries. At one point he stated a library was the best possible gift for a community, since it gave people the opportunity to improve themselves. At the cornerstone laying [of one of these libraries], one of the speakers summed up the importance many in the community placed on the new building. "In laying the cornerstone of this building," he said, "you are not merely putting in place an inorganic block. You are laying the foundation of increased knowledge, happiness, enjoyment and improvement in your community. Within the walls to be erected, you and your sons and daughters and generations yet to come, can survey the whole horizon of human existence and achievement." (Roberta Copp, an Information Services Librarian at Richland County Public Library.)

Wouldn't it be great to read a 100 years from now, "Americans first entered the worlds of information and imagination offered by media when they walked through the front doors of a Community Media Center?" Carnegie Libraries had design theories attached to them. Communities had to own the land the library was built on. The land had to accommodate future expansion and the cities had to dedicate 10 percent of the construction cost to an annual fund for upkeep. Several communities considering new media centers are embarking on more enlightened paths through scenario planning and design charrettes to examine how space and buildings can support, build and perpetuate mission. Many planning processes around space ask you to take what you have and put it somewhere else. They traditionally involve defining problems and then look at space as a solution. This isn't all bad, but organizational belief systems and mission are often over looked. Scenario planning is about Structure—Sustainment—Experience. Scenario planning is a holistic approach that involves establishing core beliefs, *structuring* space to perpetuate those beliefs, determining a role for space to *sustain* those beliefs and defining space to allow for the *experiencing* of those beliefs. The charrette planning process is designed to bring a diverse mix of community stakeholders into a structured planning exercise to elicit creative ideas and buy in. The National Charrette Institute in Portland, Oregon states, "We help people build community capacity for collaboration to create healthy community plans by teaching the art and science of dynamic planning and advancing the fields of community planning and public involvement through research and publications." (*www.charretteinstitute.org*) Yours truly is hoping to complete a Charrette Planner Certification this November. As we move forward I would suggest the Alliance form an ad hoc committee to provide a set of design recommendations to be considered in creating media centers. Maybe we can dedicate an issue of *CMR* to profile creatively designed centers, or better yet a coffee table book!

"Space—the final frontier."

Dirk Koning [dirk@grcmc.org] is executive director of the Community Media Center (award winning design) in Grand Rapids, Michigan. In full disclosure, Koning consults on facility design and technology integration for media centers and libraries.

Call for Authors, Artwork and Ideas

Community Media Review is seeking ideas, articles, photographs and artwork for the Fall 2004 issue, which is tentatively titled **Community Media: Cultural Preservation and Cultural Diversity**. This issue will celebrate the work of people who create and produce community media across all formats. Possible topics include: programming in multiple languages, serving immigrant and other non-traditional audiences, partnering and exchanging programs across borders, and addressing human rights issues in community media. Please contact guest editor Margie Nicholson, Columbia College, Chicago, with your leads and ideas as soon as possible (and no later than November 1). Contact her at mnicholson@colum.edu or 312.344.8188.

The WINKsite Story: Building Mobile Communities to Close the Loop

Phones are Changing and Phone Usage is Changing Along With It.

There is a revolution going on all over the world. People from Japan to Korea to Europe to the United States are engaging content on mobile devices in record numbers—in fact mobile access to the Internet has already surpassed desktop access. Also rising are expectations as to how you should be able to share content and communicate with the people around you.

Fueling this increase has been the astonishingly rapid rise of blogs in the last 18 months along with the proliferation of web-enabled phones—the most enthusiastic bloggers could now go mobile and with the adoption of web-enabled phones by the mass market this opportunity is rapidly spreading into mainstream. The market is literally exploding, with 1.2 billion mobile devices currently in use—and is projected to grow to 2 billion by 2006 (Cover Story: "The Next Big Thing . . . Is Now," *Business 2.0*. July 2003).

As the World Wide Web showed, things really take off when users build out their own real estate rather than relying on vendors to supply accommodations. The success of the Web was due not to mass production and economies of scale, but rather to distributed development of local content and economies driven by individual passion.

WINKsite Mobile Communities—A Better Way to Stay Connected *[http://winksite.com/site/index.cfm]*. The blogging world is overflowing with ways to send information—text, photos, video, geographical data—from a mobile device to a conventional Weblog or Web Site. But, what is blatantly missing and quite critical is a community-based solution that provides a space where individuals can meet, share and interact with content from mobile device to mobile device—"closing the loop."

Tapping into the metadata capabilities of RSS/ATOM feeds, WINKsite is able to go beyond the limits of basic content publishing to deliver a more relevant, more precise means of information distribution and device independent delivery. WINKsite provides a platform for creating true mobile communities: spaces both publishable and accessible via phones and other mobile devices. Taking that much deeper, WINKsite integrates this content with mobile-to-mobile networking and syndication features, transforming your mobile device into a powerful publishing, collaboration and coordination tool, increasing its utilitarianism.

Critical to the creation of truly useful mobile communities is providing features that support the needs of various social networks (as described in Ross Mayfield's "Ecosystem of Networks"): (1) the "Me" network, consisting of one person who needs personal productivity tools, (2) the "Creative" network, in which a dozen or more people collaborate on a project, (3) the "Social" network, in which hundreds of people share a common interest need to communicate, and (4) the "Political" network, in which thousands of people need to access breaking news and calls to action.

WINKsite Leads the Next Generation of Mobile Applications Delivering Benefits Very Different from Blogger, TypePad, NewBay, TextAmerica, Tagtag, MyWap, UPOC and Blah! et al. We've spent close to three years developing our platform and it lets individuals publish, share, broadcast and interact with mobile content in ways not previously possible. We made WINKsite so simple that if you know how to make a phone call or use voice mail you will understand how to use it after a single glance. Now that the core WINKsite platform is complete and a significant amount of data usage is streaming through the system, WINKsite is growing to include Photoblogging, Downloads, Group Messaging & Coordination, Location-Based Services, Microcontent Catalog & Payment Systems, Personalized Content Feeds, SMS/MMS Feed Notification Services, Personalized Interfaces/Skins, Automated Enterprise Content Syndication, Rich Media Delivery, Social Network Mapping (FOAF), Paid Search & Content Listings, Direct Integration with Weblogs and other valuable features.

As an intrinsically XML-based system, WINKsite will grow into the role of a clearinghouse mobilizing content both local and global in nature supporting a directory, content and community mobilization service, becoming embedded into other companies' websites in a way not possible for other content publishing or blogging systems. The features that we add to the system will generally have accessible APIs that third parties can use to tap our services at the data level, creating innovative services dependent on WINKsite.

The Rapid Financial Success of Messaging and Downloading Mobile Content Will Soon Grow Beyond Fragmented, Single-Focus Services. Therein lies a phenomenal market for brands, entertainment, portals & directory services, financial institutions and media companies to leverage their culture, messages, and offerings through mobile communities—extending their brands in a mobile environment. WINKsite offers the world's leading brands an opportunity to integrate mobile as part of the company's everyday media mix or service process. WINKsite's systems integration approach to the production and distribution of wireless online content services eliminates the barriers that have limited the "adoption of" or "traffic to" wireless applications in the past. WINKsite provides a suite of turnkey applications and mobile channels that enable brands to manage and distribute mobile content, media and promotions to the masses within a community-based environment. The result, their audience be it subscribers, customers, or fans can easily interact with the brand's programs via their mobile device within an environment that's useful, sticky and builds loyalty. These mobile concepts can be implemented together with a client or in cooperation with a third partner such as a systems integrator, advertising companies, carrier or media company. Wireless Ink is already working with various players in the television, music and publishing industries to mobilize their offerings.

Reprinted with permission from WINKsite.com

FAQs about Internet2

What is Internet2?

Internet2® is a not-for-profit consortium, led by over 200 US universities, developing and deploying advanced network applications and technology, accelerating the creation of tomorrow's Internet. With participation by over 60 leading companies, Internet2 recreates the partnership of academia, industry and government that helped foster today's Internet in its infancy.

Is Internet2 a separate network? Will Internet2 replace the current commercial Internet?

Internet2 is not a separate physical network and will not replace the Internet. Internet2 brings together institutions and resources from academia, industry and government to develop new technologies and capabilities that can then be deployed in the global Internet. Close collaboration with Internet2 corporate members will ensure that new applications and technologies are rapidly deployed throughout the Internet. Just as email and the World Wide Web are legacies of earlier investments in academic and federal research networks, the legacy of Internet2 will be to expand the possibilities of the broader Internet.

How will Internet2 benefit current Internet users?

Internet2 and its members are developing and testing new technologies, such as IPv6, multicasting and quality of service (QoS) that will enable revolutionary Internet applications. However, these applications require performance not possible on today's Internet. More than a faster Web or email, these new technologies will enable completely new applications such as digital libraries, virtual laboratories, distance-independent learning and tele-immersion. A primary goal of Internet2 is to ensure the transfer of new network technology and applications to the broader education and networking communities.

What kind of technology will be needed to use the advanced Internet applications and technologies?

We expect the capabilities needed to use new technologies and applications being tested and developed by Internet2 and its members to be built into upcoming generations of commercial products. Internet2 corporate partners are working closely with the Internet2 community to expand the capabilities of their products and services as well as the global Internet. For example, just as most personal computers sold today include the ability to use the Internet, tomorrow's commercial products will include the ability to use advanced networking capabilities.

What is the relationship between the Next Generation Internet (NGI) Internet2, and other advanced networking initiatives?

The university-led Internet2 and the federally-led NGI are parallel and complementary initiatives based in the United States. Internet2 and NGI are already working together in many areas. For example, through participation in a NSF NGI program, over 150 Internet2 universities have received competitively awarded grants to support connections to advanced backbone networks such as Abilene and the very high performance Backbone Network Service (vBNS). Internet2 is also forming partnerships with similar advanced networking initiatives around the world. Working together will help ensure a cohesive and interoperable advanced networking infrastructure for research and education, and the continued interoperability of the global Internet.

Why are universities taking the lead in Internet2?

University research and education missions increasingly require the collaboration of personnel and hardware located at campuses throughout the country in ways not possible over today's Internet. Moreover, universities are a principal source of both the demand for advanced networking technologies and the talent needed to implement them. Researchers, instructors and students at Internet2 universities are able to explore capabilities beyond today's Internet as they teach and learn and conduct science in disciplines ranging from the fine arts to physics.

How much is being invested in Internet2 and where is the money coming from?

Internet2 members have committed to actively collaborate in the development of advanced networking technologies and applications. For Internet2 universities, this means providing high-performance networking on their campuses—investing to upgrade their campus networks and connecting to a national Internet2 backbone network. For Internet2 corporate partners, this means actively collaborating with Internet2 universities and in Internet2 initiatives. Internet2 universities have committed over $80 million per year in new investments on their own campuses and corporate members have committed more than $30 million over the life of the project. In addition, Internet2 member institutions may receive funding in the form of competitively awarded grants from the NSF and other federal agencies participating in the federal Next Generation Internet initiative.

What about educational institutions that are not Internet2 members?

Participation in Internet2 is open to any university that commits to providing on-campus facilities that will allow advanced applications development. The investment this requires may be more than many institutions can manage right now. However, Internet2 also supports collaboration by Internet2 universities with non-member institutions. Fifteen years ago, connecting to the Internet could be as expensive as participating in Internet2 today. As the technology dropped in price, the entire academic community benefited from the efforts of the initial research participants. Deployment of Internet2 technology will follow a similar pattern.

What are some of Internet2's long-term goals?

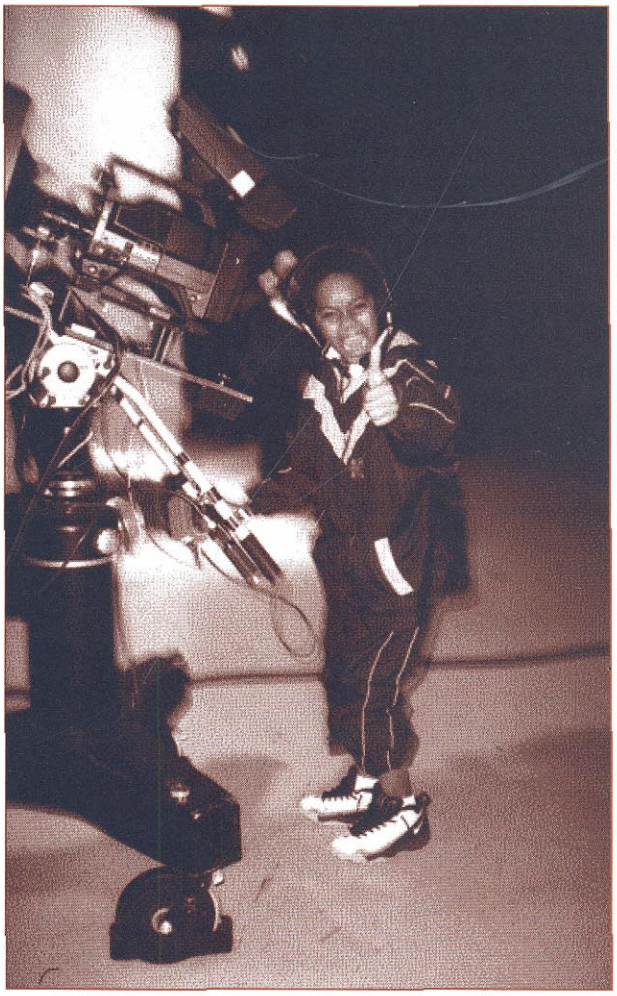
A key goal of this effort is to accelerate the diffusion of advanced Internet technology, in particular into the commercial sector. In this way, Internet2 will help to sustain United States leadership in internetworking technology. Internet2 will benefit non-university members of the educational community as well, especially K-12 and public libraries. Internet2 and its members aim to share their expertise with as wide a range of computer users as possible. This approach characterized the first Internet and it can work again today.

Reprinted from the Internet2 website at www.internet2.org

Adventures in Television Charts Hands-on Approach to Media Literacy for Youth

BY VERONICA HUNTER DE BRUIN

Waking up at 5:30 in the morning, 13-year-old Ivory would sleepily walk to the public bus stop, one of many buses he would take on his journey from rural Oregon to Portland's Northeast side. Media education materials in hand, he would arrive at the youth media summer camp by 8:00 a.m., just in time for breakfast. Once breakfast was over, it was time to get to work and Ivory was ready for action. He was studying to be a cameraman and was very excited to learn about advanced camera operation before the next day's on-location shoot. Enthusiastically, he white balanced his DSR250 from a white card, although it could have been done with his vivid smile. He made new friends during the course of the week and learned about working with peers as a team. He was the oldest of six in his family and he was no stranger to the lessons of responsibility and cooperation. At the end of each long, exciting day, Ivory would board bus 15, to take the 42, and then transfer to the 29 to be home in time to make his siblings dinner.



Ivory is one of over 200 disadvantaged youth that have seen a new world opened before them through "Adventures in Television." From it's inception in 2000, the "Adventures in Television" program has been a significant element of the youth outreach initiatives launched by Portland Community Media in Portland Oregon. This unique, media production camp for youth ages 12–17, allows students to learn how to harness the power of the television media while engaging in and understanding the value of community service.

"Adventures in Television" is a collaborative project designed to help youth improve their communication skills through hands-on learning techniques. By learning to use video equipment, cameras, editors, audio boards, video switchers, graphics, etc. the students better understand how effective communication tools influence their world. Students learn approaches to interviewing people, how to identify and assemble a video story, and general media literacy skills during this program.

As part of the "Adventures experience," the youth produce public service announcements for 10 nonprofit organizations. Five youth for each crew handle all of the scripting and production aspects. That provides the youth with practical experience in video production and exposes them to local community services. The PSAs are screened at the weekend premiere.

Media literacy is of the greatest importance with our First Amendment rights under constant duress. The more knowledgeable our youth are about the media, its creation and their role in its existence, the healthier our media environment and the stronger our community of media makers and First Amendment advocates will grow.

The "Adventures in Television" project is a wonderful opportunity for youth to learn an alternative education. In creating video projects with a team, students realize how important it is to cooperate and compromise when creating a combined artistic vision. They also begin to learn how the media affects their own lives with the images displayed on television. The students leave the "Adventures in Television" program with a wonderful feeling of accomplishment, self worth and newfound communication skills.

"Adventures in Television" benefits not only the youth as their media literacy and communication skills are shaped, but also the nonprofit organizations whose stories reach the community through the power of cable television. The youth are also introduced to the valuable services nonprofits offer our communities. With their newfound skills, students leave the adventure with a better grasp of how media, technology and effective communication influence the world around them.

To find out how your organization can create it's own Adventures in Television go to *www.adventuresintv.org.*

Veronica Hunter de Bruin is director of visual communications for Arttext Press Agency [www.arttext.com] in Amsterdam, Netherlands, and formerly of Portland Community Media in Oregon. Contact her at veronica@l-hunter.nl.

Additional information on the project is also available through Portland Community Media at www.pcm.org

users downloading the file, the faster it can be served. Users who have a complete copy of the file are called "seeds," those downloading the file are known as "peers," and the programs used to upload and download are called "clients."

The official client (*www.bittorrent.com*) was created by Bram Cohen, inventor of BitTorrent. Azureus (*http://azureus .sourceforge.net*) is a cross-platform, java-based client that handles multiple uploads and downloads within a single window.

Broadcatching Tools: The idea of combining BitTorrent and RSS to automatically distribute media files is often attributed to Andrew Grumet (*http://grumet.net/weblog*). He's helping to develop a program called iSpider (*http://ispider.source forge.net*) based on Adam Curry's iPodder (*http://ipodder.org*). Downhill Battle (*http://downhillbattle.org*) is taking an opposite route with BlogTorrent (*www.downhillbattle.org/labs/battletorrent*), making it easier for content creators to share their own files.

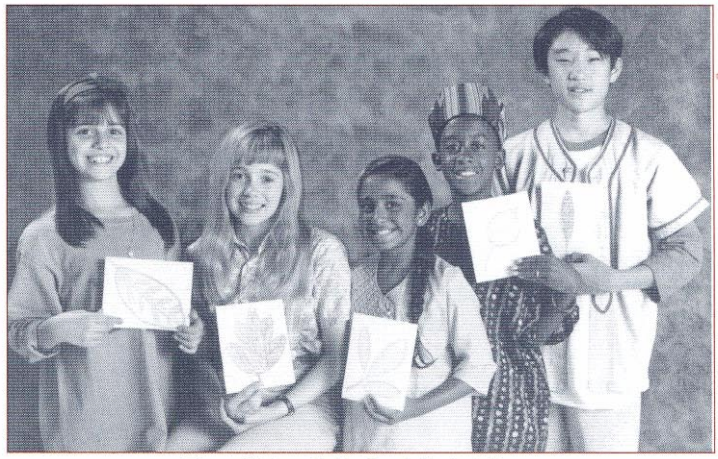
Live Music Communities: Live music fans are one of the largest and most prominent community to embrace this technology, with hundreds of live, legal, and lossless recordings exchanged daily. Communities such as Sharing the Groove (*www.sharing thegroove.org*) and Etree (*http://bt.etree.org*) provide fans with tools to discuss and exchange high-quality live recordings.

Linux Distributions: Linux users are often passionate about their operating system of choice, and the release of a new version usually initiates a burst of discussion on the web, followed by a rush to download and install the newest release. By providing torrent download links, Linux distributions can move quickly and efficiently among users. Popular Linux distributions available via BitTorrent include: The Red Hat Fedora project (*http://torrent.dulug .duke.edu*), Debian GNU/Linux (*www.debian.org/CD/torrent-cd*) and dyne:bolic (*http://dynebolic.org*), a Rastafarian multimedia studio designed for media activists and artists.

Video Compression: Among communities trading video on peer-to-peer networks, MPEG-4 variants have been popular codec choices as they allow DVD quality video files to fit in the space of a CD. These include the freely downloadable, but commercially licensed, DivX (*http://divx.com*) and 3ivx (*http://3ivx.com*), as well as the open-source alternative, XviD (*http://xvid.org*). While Apple's default MPEG-4 encoder in QuickTime 6 was disappointing to many, much hope is being placed on the release of their new operating system (10.4 / Tiger) and its implementation of the H.264/AVC codec, also known as MPEG-4 part 10 (*www.apple.com/macosx/tiger/h264.html*). This next-generation codec (*http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/H.264*) has been ratified as part of the HD-DVD specification and has been adopted for broadcast use in Korea and Japan.

Video Trading Communities. While hundreds of communities are based around sharing copyrighted materials, a few already focus on legally tradable video files. One of the best is DV Guide (*http://dv.open4all.info*) a tracker known for hosting video footage of activist Joshua Kinberg (*http://bikesagainstbush.com*) being arrested during the RNC, footage that was downloaded almost 5000 times during the convention. Other sites distributing video this way are LegalTorrents (*www.legaltorrents.com*), Torrentocracy (*www.torrentocracy.com*) and the Commonwealth Broadband Collaborative (*www.cbcmedia.net*). Also of interest are videoblogs (*http://videoblogging.info*) with MNN's Jay Dedman breaking new ground (*http://momentshowing.typepad.com*).

– Researched and compiled by Peter Bull and Daniell Krawczyk



Five children talk about their future.

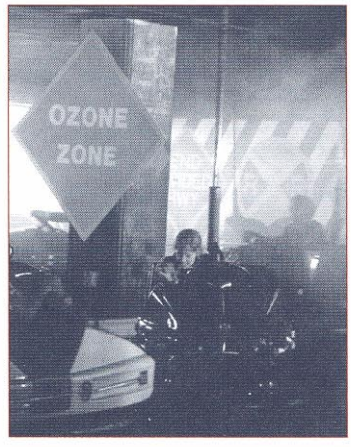
Award Winning Program Available Free to Alliance Members before November

by Barbara Pyle

In this visually stunning documentary, five multi-racial youth speak out for the earth. They speak for those who cannot…the animals, the trees, the oceans. The film takes viewers on a wild roller coaster ride from overstocked supermarkets and overcrowded freeways to tornado ripped villages and dying rainforests. At the end of the ride, the children's message sounds an alarm—to preserve the planet before it is too late. Fast moving, entertaining and compelling, *One Child, One Voice* (OCOV) is a powerful wake up call to grown ups, exhorting them to" give a voice to the voiceless..."

This film emboldens and empowers. Its website, *www.earthsecure.org*, features a voter registration link. Viewers are also encouraged to "Vote for the Earth" by mailing leaf drawn postcards to the Tree of Life, sponsored by international grassroots organization, Kids against Pollution. The Tree travels with KAP members to social justice, faith based and environmental conferences around the world. So far more than a million viewers have responded.

Shot on 35 mm with brilliant documentary images, this 25-minute program uses a kaleidoscope of carnival metaphors,



making complex social and environmental issues exciting and accessible to both children and their parents. While the fast talking carnival barker touts business as usual the wise old fortune teller predicts the consequences.

OCOV has garnered 40 awards, including an EMMY nomination, Parents Choice and a 25-year CLASSIC TELLY. Alliance members requesting OCOV before November 1, 2004 will receive it free. Contact bpproductions@bellsouth.net with address and tape format needs.

Barbara Pyle, former vice president/environmental policy for Turner Broadcasting, recipient of over 200 hundred awards, received the UN's highest honor for life-time achievement in preserving the environment in 1997. Information about upcoming programs is available on www.peoplecountTV.com.

Channels for Change II: More than 500 Attend Tampa Conference

There is nothing like a conference to re-energize the people who work in and advocate for community media. Each year the Alliance hosts a four-day national conference and each year, they seem to get better and better.

This year the conference was held in beautiful Tampa Bay, Florida. The Tampa Waterside Marriott Hotel had plenty to offer attendees, good restaurants, excellent workout facilities and a spectacular pool with a breathtaking view of the channel.

A memorial luncheon and presentation was held instead of a keynote address this year to honor Alliance Board Chair Brian Wilson, who died earlier this year.

"Channels for Change II" was the theme that played on the actual location of the conference and the thousands of access channels across this country that are affecting change in their local communities every day. Over 500 people participated in the conference as attendees, speakers and vendors.

Hosted by a hard-working and committed local planning committee, one of the highlights was the Friday night dance party at the Florida Aquarium. Mindy Snyder, Ann Flynn-Goldenberg, Greg Vawter and Louise Thompson led the local committee, joined by Lucy Griggs, Frederick Russell, Mike Flynn, Tom Dea, Ron Hebert and Cathi Brake, Elliott Mitchell, John Giancola and dedicated volunteers from the local community.

Chuck Sherwood did a superior job of planning the program that offered over 60 workshops and plenary sessions. New to the conference this year was a concentration on local organizing strategies (thank you Martha Wallner!) and an emphasis on "e-learning" and "e-government" website development. The media literacy track presented by Bob McCannon and Belinda Rawlins of the New Mexico Media Literacy Project scored rave reviews as did the "Global Media and ICT Issues" track. Management and fund development workshops offered practical nuts and bolts advice and as always, the public policy track laid out the challenges that face community media in the coming months and years.

This year's trade show was the most successful ever with over 45 vendors and nonprofit programmers on hand. The Alliance's marketing coordinator, Margaret Wanca-Daniels, did a superior job of managing the trade show and developing member discounts on products.

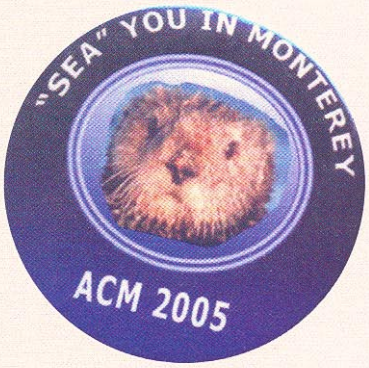
Special events included a presentation of a new documentary by George Stoney called *Getting Out*, that told the story of inmates being released from prison and their integration back into society. Amy Goodman, nationally recognized host of *Democracy Now!* spoke at the closing ceremony urging all attendees to continue their work to bring alternative media to the public. The *Hometown Video Festival* honored the work of professional and volunteer producers from around the country and especially recognized the contributions made by youth. Deborah Vinsel served as coordinator of the festival and Rod Swartz produced the awards ceremony.

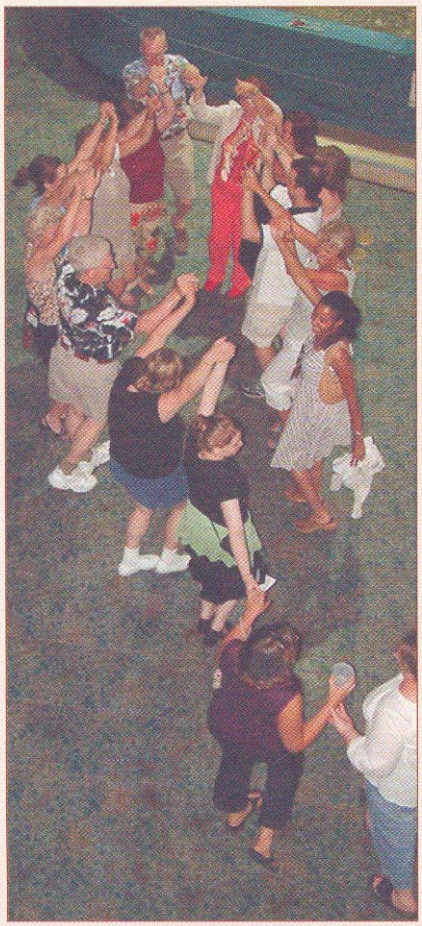
It was fitting that the keynote luncheon be replaced with a memorial luncheon to honor Brian Wilson, Alliance board chair, and the many contributions he made to the Alliance and to the people around him. Zane Blaney of Access San Francisco created a stirring slide show tribute to Brian's life and various people who knew him spoke of his compassion and keen sense of humor. The memorial included the announcement of a scholarship fund in Brian's name to be awarded to Alliance members or their children who are pursuing specific courses of study in disciplines important to community media.

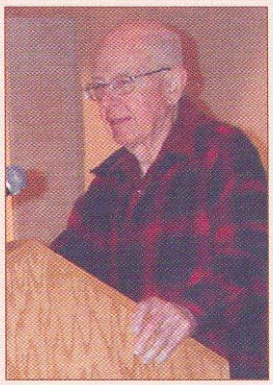
The national conference is never the work of one person and the Alliance is grateful to our exceptional meeting planners, Robin Turner and Laura Markusson (Drohan Management) as well as a terrific national planning committee that includes: Debra Rogers (Chair), James Horwood, Melissa Mills, Jackie Steven, Chuck Sherwood and Paul Congo.

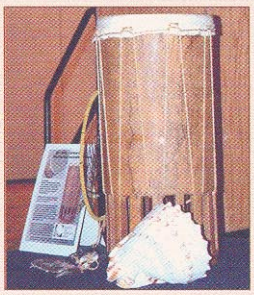
Plans are already underway for the 2005 International Conference and Trade Show in Monterey, California. There is no doubt that Monterey will be a huge success and the local planning committee is planning some fun activities for attendees and their families.

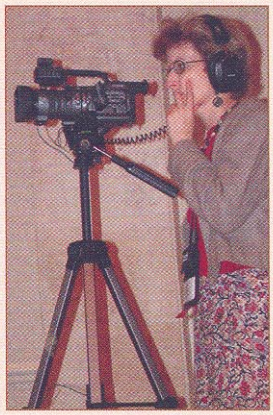
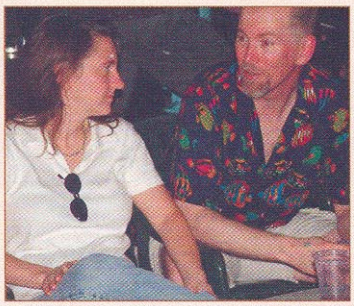
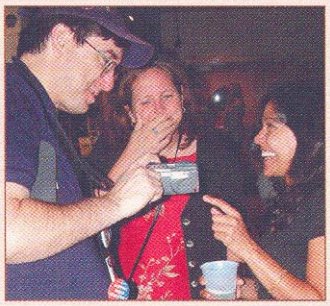
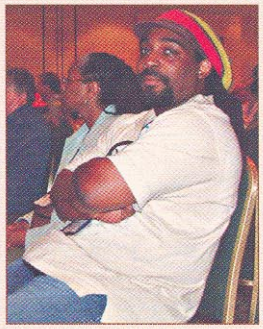
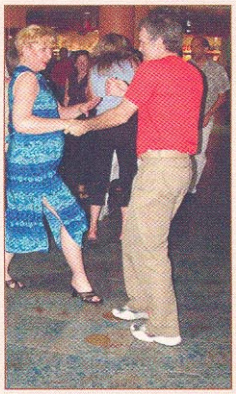
"Sea" you in Monterey!

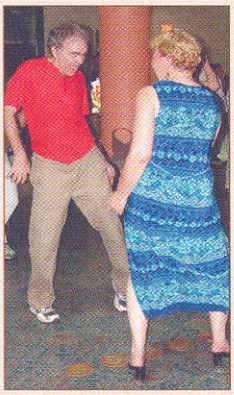


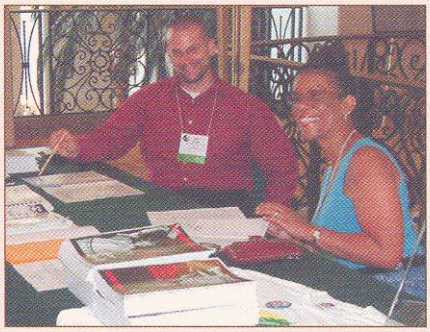


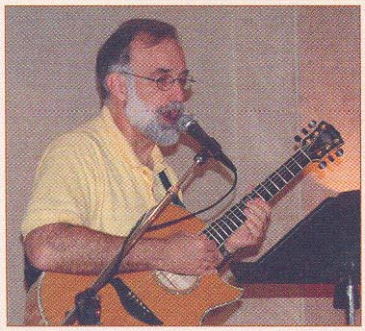










Alliance Awards Community Media Leaders

The Alliance for Community Media bestowed its highest awards to four community media leaders at the Alliance International Conference and Trade Show in Tampa, Florida in July.

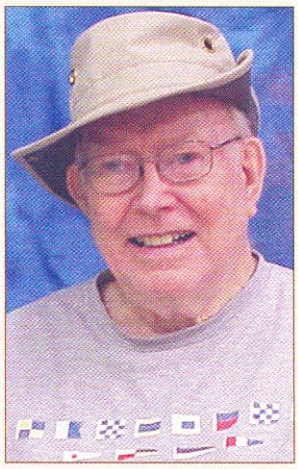
Harry "Hap" Haasch of the Community Television Network in Ann Arbor, Michigan) received the *Sue Buske Leadership Award*; **Thenmozhi Soundararjan**, executive director of Third World Majority in Oakland, California, received the *Jewell Ryan-White Award for Cultural Diversity*; and Homer Baldwin, long-time volunteer for Wadsworth Community Television in Wadsworth, Ohio, and Amy Goodman, national radio and television host of *Democracy Now!* each received the *George Stoney Award for Humanistic Communications.*

"We are thrilled to recognize such outstanding people and efforts," said Alliance Executive Director Bunnie Riedel, "Hap," Thenmozhi, Homer and Amy are shining examples of the accomplishments of Public, Educational and Governmental (PEG) access."

The Sue Buske Leadership Award presented to Hap Haasch recognizes his years of leadership at the local, regional and national levels of the Alliance. A member since 1988, Hap twice served on the national board, filling such roles as organizational development chair, vice chair, information services chair, and strategic planning chair. He has distinguished himself as a leader on the Central States Regional Board, and at the local level, he is both cable administrator for the City of Ann Arbor and chief executive of its PEG Access center.

"The Buske award carries stringent criteria that the recipient must have been a leader at every level of the organization," said Riedel, "That is not an easy accomplishment and this award speaks to Hap's commitment."

The Jewell Ryan-White Award for Cultural Diversity went to filmmaker, singer and media activist Thenmozhi Soundararjan. She connects grassroots organizers in developing countries with media resources. As founding director of the Center for Digital Storytelling's national community programs, she has worked with over 200 communities around the country.



Amy Goodman [l] and Homer Baldwin [c] each received the George Stoney Award for Humanistic Communications; Hap Haasch [r] received the Sue Buske Leadership Award; and Thenmozhi Soundararjan [photo unavailable] received the Jewell Ryan-White Award for Cultural Diversity.

"Thenmozhi shows why grassroots media activism is so important. She uses media to give a voice to underrepresented people," said Riedel. "We are proud to give her this distinguished award."

The Jewell Ryan-White Award for Cultural Diversity is given annually to those persons who show an outstanding contribution to a process that encourages, facilitates or creates culturally diverse and/or non-mainstream involvement in the field of community media.

The George Stoney Award for Humanistic Communications is given annually to an organization or individual that has made an outstanding contribution to championing the growth and experience of humanistic communications. There were two recipients this year: Amy Goodman and Homer Baldwin.

Amy Goodman is one of the toughest no-holds-barred journalists in America. Goodman is fearless whether she's covering hot spots and protests on the streets of America, covering atrocities throughout the world ignored by the corporate media, or conducting hard-hitting interviews in the studio. Amy is also a documentary filmmaker. In 2000, *Democracy Now!* pioneered an unprecedented multi-media collaboration involving nonprofit community radio, satellite television, public access cable TV and the Internet. Through these media outlets, *Democracy Now!* broadcast live two-hour daily specials at both the Republican and Democratic national conventions.

"Amy is a critical voice in alternative media. She dares to cover stories and conduct interviews that the rest of the media will not or cannot do," said Riedel. "Access centers across this country run *Democracy Now!* and the feedback from the communities has been quite positive."

Homer Baldwin also received the George Stoney Award for Humanistic Communication. In the early 1970s, when Time Warner Cable operated an access studio in the local high school in Wadsworth, Homer was a school custodian. He was also a graduate of the Brooks School of Photography in Santa Barbara CA, and his custodian's office was adjacent to the studio. Homer began videotaping school events and dedicated himself to taping as many school activities as possible, in order to build support for the access studio. He was soon appointed to the Wadsworth Cable Commission, where he helped expand the facilities, and in the 1980s was instrumental in getting Time Warner Cable to turn control of the studio over to the city. Thanks to Homer, WCTV's five employees and access producers generate over 2,000 programs a year. Homer has produced over 20 films and close to 100 documentaries and, at 77 years old, he continues to produce documentaries. He is considered the "father of public access" in Wadsworth, Ohio.

"Homer's dedication to Public access has been unwavering. It is because of visionary people like Homer that access is growing and thriving throughout the United States," said Riedel.

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Free programming about alcohol and drug addiction treatment

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Hap Haasch: 2004 Buske Leadership Award

BY HAP HAASCH

It's an honor to be associated with an award from the Alliance for Community Media bearing the name of Sue Buske. I've known Sue for many years, and I continue to be amazed by the vision and passion she brings to her work.

It's also humbling to receive this award, particularly when you look at the list of previous recipients—it reads like a "who's who" of the community media movement. These are people I've admired since I joined the National Federation of Local Cable Programmers back in 1988.

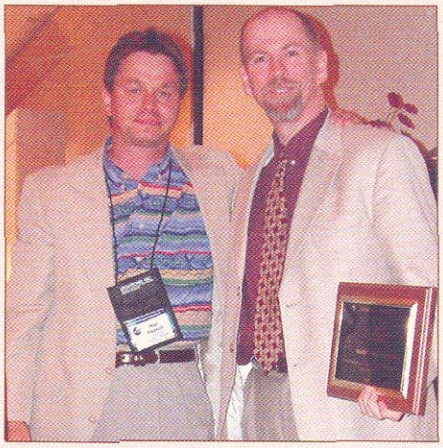
There are many people I must thank for giving me the opportunity to participate with the Alliance. But first, I need to thank Tom Bishop and Dirk Koning, and the other seven people I didn't know about until a moment ago, for nominating me for this award. Gentlemen, my first thought for showing my gratitude was to offer to pick up your bar tabs tonight. Then, I came to my senses and realized that even though I love you, I just can't afford you. So, I'll think of another way to say thanks.

I want to thank the Alliance National Board of Directors for considering me for this award, particularly when there are so many other deserving leaders in this organization. Thank you to Bunnie Riedel, for everything you've done for the Alliance, and for me. Wherever you go, and whatever you do, my best wishes go with you.

I want to thank the Central States Region Board, and the Michigan Chapter Board. Simply put, it's a privilege to work with you all.

I'd like to offer a thought on serving on Alliance boards…yes, there is a lot of work to do, it's often difficult and challenging, and sometimes solutions to problems don't come easy or without personal anguish. *However*—there have been, and will continue to be, moments of great collective joy. For those moments I've shared with you, I will be forever grateful.

I need to send a huge note of thanks and appreciation to the staff at Community Television Network in Ann Arbor, Michigan. These are the people who have pitched in with support of Alliance projects—everything from conference planning, brochure editing, newsletter mailings, video festival judging…all things *they* have done to support the Alliance. So,



Hap Haasch [left] receives the Buske Leadership Award from friend and fellow Central Stater, Alliance Vice Chair Tom Bishop.

thank you Ralph Salmeron, Lucy Visovatti, Peggy Stevens, Greg McDonald, Lani Garcia, Deb Sturza, Mike Koski, Rob Cross, Tim Nagae, and Craig Kuras.

More than anyone, I need to thank my lovely wife, Susan, and our wonderful daughters, Kelsey, Haley, and Shannon. Not only have they supported my being away from home on Alliance business, they have come to embrace the wonderful people in this organization as friends and family.

Looking back, in 1984 I started the Master's program at Michigan State University. Oddly, my course of study was Telecommunications Management, focusing on the cable industry. I was preparing for a career as a general manager of cable systems. I happened to pay for graduate school by working for Ron Onufer at the government access channel in Lansing, Michigan. I owe a huge debt of gratitude to Ron for opening a door for me that allowed me to shape some semblance of a career in community media. Without him, I'd probably be in a very dark place about now.

While in graduate school, we had a cantankerous professor, well known to my fellow MSU grads in the audience. His name is Dr. Tom Muth, and he was famous for conducting impromptu hallway lectures on the future of the telecommunications industry. One day he cornered a small group of us, and mimicking the character Mr. Robinson in the film *The Graduate*, he leaned into us and whispered two words…"cellular telephone." Then he winked, and walked away.

Some of my classmates took Dr. Muth's advice, and got into the cellular telephone industry in its relative infancy. I recently had a chance to visit with some of these folks while celebrating the retirement of my academic advisor, Dr. Tom Baldwin. As it turns out, several of them that took Dr. Muth's advice and traveled the cellular telephone path recently cashed in their profit sharing and stock option plans to retire early, and have now begun teaching at MSU. To a person, they said that their cellular careers were lucrative, but ultimately unfulfilling. I'm happy they came back to MSU and found a rewarding second career.

For me, well…I chose a different path…one not necessarily known for financial rewards. However, I wouldn't trade my experiences in community media, or the relationships formed along the way, for any stock option on the planet.

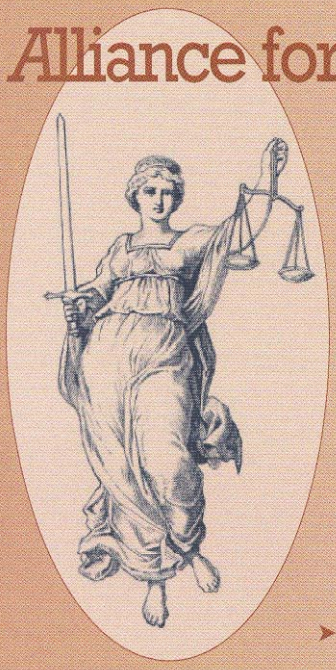
It is somewhat awkward to accept the Buske Leadership Award this year, when my personal choice would have been Brian Wilson, about whom you'll hear much more about tomorrow. That said, I want to share a couple of personal thoughts about Brian with you.

In November of 2002, the Alliance National Board is meeting in Tacoma, Washington, and the big issue is the election of a new board chair to follow John Rocco. Brian and I are both interested in the position, and we peel away from the group to have a long, sincere, private discussion about what would be best for the Alliance. During the conversation, I came to realize with astounding clarity that Brian was by far the best person for chair. I am so grateful we elected Brian as chair at that meeting, and that I had a chance to serve with him for all too brief a time.

The other moment I want to share with you happened this past April when Alan Bushong, Tom Bishop, and I attended the wake and funeral services for Brian in Bloomington, Minnesota. I felt honored to be representing this organization as we paid our respects to our colleague and friend. What I wasn't prepared for was the overwhelming warmth of Brian's family and loved ones. Despite their obvious and visible grief, they invited three total strangers to a family dinner following the wake services. Etched in my memory is the handshake of Brian's father, the quiet strength of

continued on page 47

Alliance for Communications Democracy



For more than 15 years, the Alliance for Communications Democracy has been fighting to preserve and strengthen access. Though the odds against us have been high, and the mega-media, corporate foes well-heeled and powerful, time and again we've won in the courts. We can't continue this critical work without your support. With the ramifications of the 1996 Telecommunications Act still manifesting themselves, and new legislation on the horizon, we must be vigilant if we are to prevail and preserve democratic communications. If not us, who? If not now, when? Please join the Alliance for Communications Democracy today!

Become an Alliance Subscriber for $350/year and receive detailed reports on current court cases threatening access, pertinent historical case citations, and other Alliance for Communications Democracy activities.

- Voting membership open to nonprofit access operations for an annual contribution of $3,000.
- Assoicate, Supporter and Subscriber memberships available to organizations and individuals at the following levels:
- Alliance Associate $2500 – copies of all briefs and reports.
- Alliance Supporter $500 – copies of all reports and enclosures.
- Alliance Subscriber $350 – copies of all reports.

Direct membership inquiries to ACD Treasurer Rob Brading, Multnomah Community Television, 26000 SE Stark St., Gresham, OR 97038, telephone 503.667.7636, or email at rbrading@mctv.org

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his mother, and the warmth and beauty of his sisters. For me, and I think for Alan and Tom, it was a very special evening.

Now I'd like to use this opportunity to ask something from all of you. As Tom pointed out in his introduction, I served on three different Alliance boards simultaneously at one time or another. Now folks, this is not necessarily a good thing! There are many, many talented people in this organization, and I'm asking you to step up and help out in some way.

Finally, I'd like to mention something I'll call "The Next 700 Days." I was reading about telecommunication giant SBC's plan to deploy advanced fiber networks in major and mid-major US markets. They plan to distribute multiple products on these networks—high speed internet, traditional voice services, and lo and behold…VIDEO services! Now, SBC just might knock on your city council's door and ask for a cable television franchise so they can play by the rules. However, I expect they have already activated their lobbying machine to influence the next generation of telecommunications legislation currently being crafted in Washington.

A little voice in my regulator's brain is telling me the next 700 days of telecommunication policy development will be even bigger and more important than the 1996 revision of the Communications Act. The stakes are huge for community media, so please get involved in pubic policy work, visit the Legislative Action Center on the Alliance website, meet and work with your elected officials in Congress.

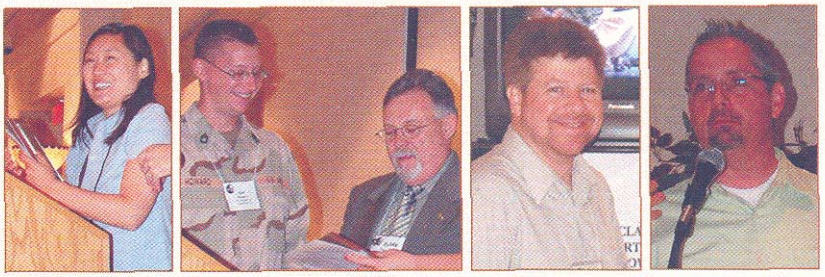
In closing I'd like to share with you an observation my wife had about the Alliance. She's an occupational therapist who works in rehabilitation programs with patients who've suffered closed head injuries, spinal chord injuries, or are dealing with the results of prosthetic surgery. As a professional, she is an active member of the Occupational Therapy Association, and they have chapters and a national organization that hold meetings and conferences much like the Alliance.

Over the years, my wife has experienced both groups, and her observation is this: the people involved in the Alliance for Community Media have formed relationships that are different from the "professional colleague" relationships she sees in her own organization. She has noticed that in the Alliance, people who don't see each other all that often still show a depth of compassion and caring that looks more like lifelong friendship than it does professional association.

I think she's right. I don't know why this is, I'm just glad that it is. So, friends, thank you for letting me be a part of the Alliance for Community Media, and a small part of your lives.

Best wishes always…thank you.

Hap Haasch



Receiving Director's Choice Awards (l to r) were Inja Coates of Media Tank; Sergeant First Class Matt Howard and T. Clark Taylor for Soldiers Radio and Television; Charlie Mount for the late Lloyd Rigler and Classic Arts Showcase; and Ross Braver for the City of San Jose.

Director's Choice Awards Recognize Courage, Service

The City of San Jose, California; Inja Coates of Media Tank; Lloyd Rigler of Classic Arts Showcase; and Army Newswatch of Soliders' Radio and Television were named recipients of the 2004 Director's Choice Awards at the Alliance conference in Tampa.

"These individuals and organizations have shown tremendous courage and service in their communities and across the country," said Bunnie Riedel, Executive Director of the Alliance, "that is why they are so deserving of this award."

The City of San Jose and Comcast cable corporation are engaged in a legal battle over the franchise renewal. After almost four years spent trying to reach agreement on the franchise renewal, Comcast took the city to court saying that the city's requirements in the renewal proposal were a violation of its First Amendment Rights. Primarily Comcast objected to San Jose seeking to require Comcast to provide an institutional network and full support for Public, Educational and Government (PEG) access channels. The court denied Comcast's motion for an injunction against the city and said that the cable operator "has no entitlement to renewal."

Inja Coates is a long-time media activist who now works at Media Tank in Philadelphia. Inja has been on the front lines of trying to get Public access created in Philadelphia and has spent many long hours working on the issue. Ms. Coates also tackles hot media issues such as media consolidation, cross-ownership of media, media accuracy, diversity in media and the independent media movement.

The creator of the 24-hour, 7-day-a-week public interest program, *Classic Arts Showcase*, Mr. Lloyd Rigler, was honored posthumously. Created in 1994, *Classic Arts Showcase* is beamed via satellite to all of North and South America (including the Bahamas and Hawaii). Called "Classic MTV," *Classic Arts Showcase* has featured performances by Andres Segovia, Maria Callas and the Bolshoi Ballet (to name a few).

Soldiers' Radio and Television produces *Army Newswatch*, a half hour bi-weekly program and provides it free to 792 access centers across the United States. *Army Newswatch* tells stories from the perspective of the soldier, whether on the ground in Iraq, doing medical missions in Latin America, or engaging in sports and entertainment here at home. *Army Newswatch* addresses issues important to retirees and active duty military and their families.

Trade Show Favorites

Conferees had their favorites among the Trade Show exhibitors. Claiming awards were **NewTek** for best product; **Facil** for best access product; **Synergy** for friendliest vendor; **Leightronix** for best tchotchke; and the **New Mexico Media Literacy Project** for best display [pictured at right].

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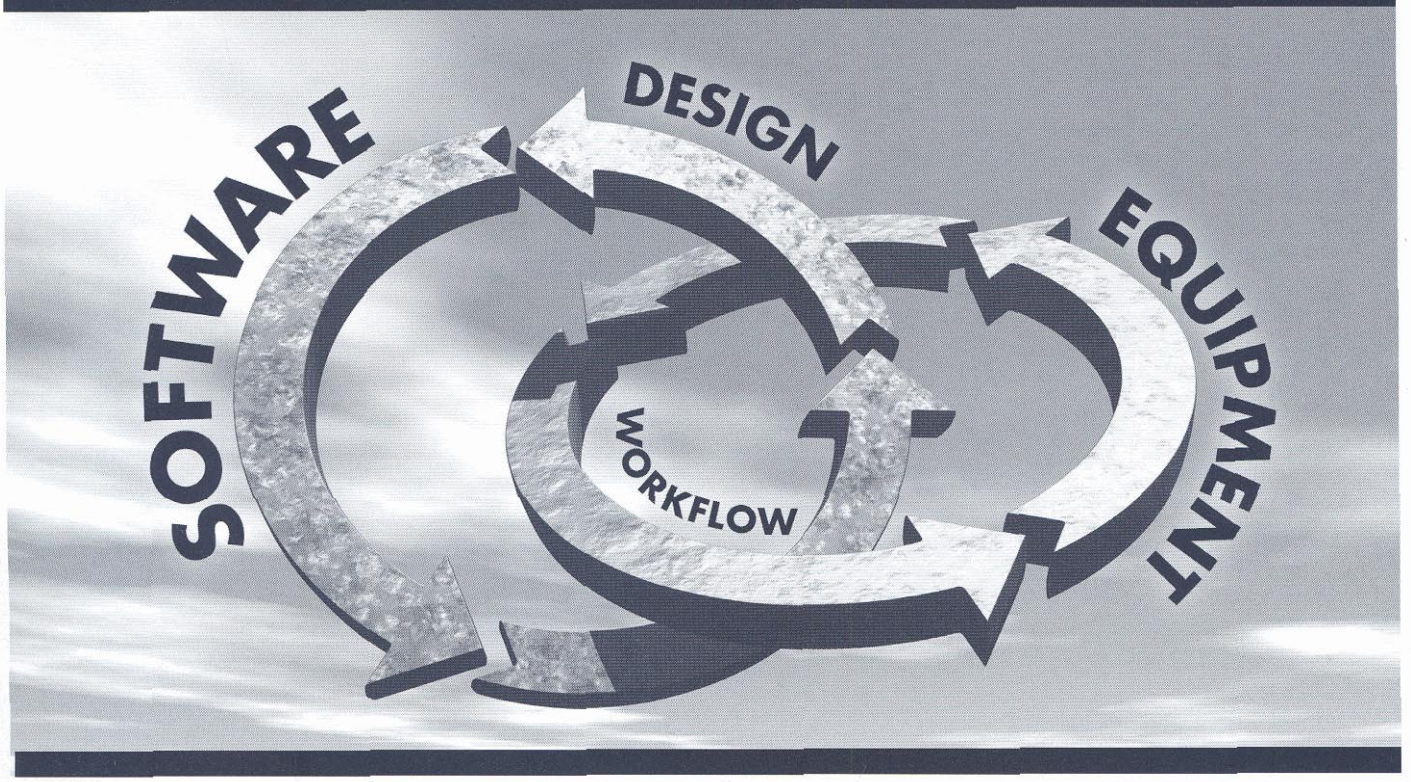

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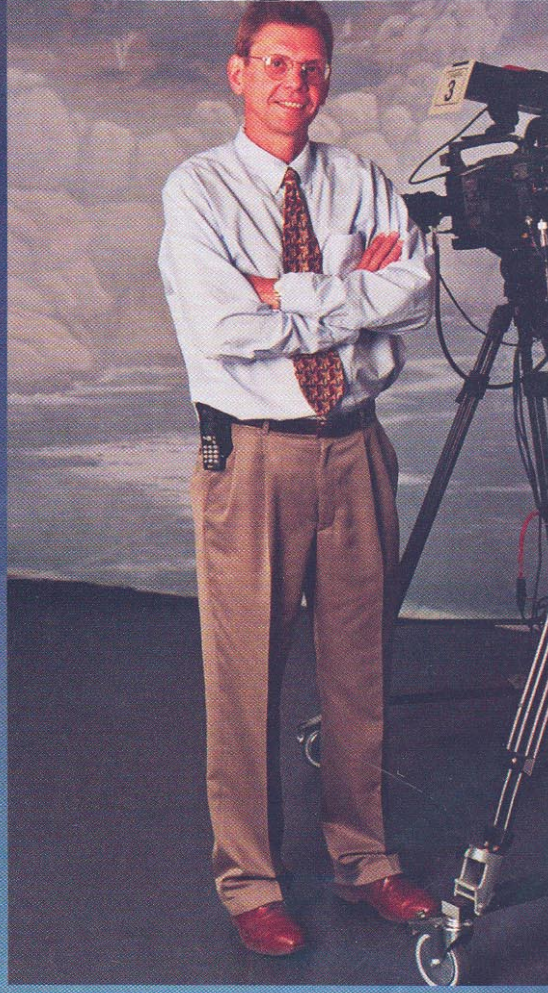

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